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THE REAL DIARY OF THE WORST FARMER

Holding our arms outspread, we gradually got him in a corner (page 38)

THE REAL DIARY OF THE WORST FARMER

BY

HENRY A. SHUTE

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
B. MORGAN DENNIS

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DEDICATION

I DEDICATE this book to amateur farmers, wherever located, and in particular to professional and salaried men who are fortunate enough to possess, by prescription, deed of purchase, lease, discovery, or squatter sovereignty, enclosed or improved land sufficient for a farm or garden, or for the raising of domestic animals.

And I say to each and every one of this class that you who have inherited a love for the soil and an affection for domestic animals are fortunate. And I believe that a love for the soil and a keen interest in domestic animals may be acquired by you who have not inherited it.

Actual money profit may not result, either from the cultivation of the soil, or from raising your own pork, eggs, poultry, or milk, but the greatest pleasure and satisfaction may be derived from an interest in such pursuits, which, after all, is the main point.

Your wife may at times, and justly, greet you with marked coldness on your return from the office, owing to some lack of unanimity in regard to the frescoing of the ceiling in the guest room, or the laying of hardwood floors in the front hall; your daughter may resent your justifiable criticism of the length or rather the brevity of her skirts, or the diaphanous nature of her hosiery, and may not, on that account, welcome your return with the outspoken affection of childhood; your son may feel aggrieved over your frank comment as to his taste in neckties or cigarettes, and may manifest a disconcerting coolness at the reunion, but you may be absolutely sure that your horse will turn its head, prick up its ears, and whinny with delight at your approach, your cow moo like the bassoon in the orchestra and lick your hands with her rough tongue, your pig twist its curly tail still tighter and twinkle its little piggy eyes with delight, and your sheep bleat and press its woolly form against your knees in welcome.

And whatever you raise of crops or supplies will be yours, and so much more of the world's supply, a satisfaction in itself.

"Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose."

HENRY A. SHUTE

Exeter, New Hampshire
February 10, 1920

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Drawn by MORGAN DENNIS

THE REAL DIARY OF THE WORST FARMER

Sunday, March 10, 191–. Heard a bluebird today. In spite of my great age (I am on the sunny side of sixty) the note of the bluebird always awakens a thrill that carries me back to my boyhood. One is sure to hear a bluebird several times before one sees it, and this year was no exception. I heard the musical warble as I came up through the bulkhead from the furnace room with a hod of ashes.

It is one of the charmingly informal duties incidental to my residence in a country town, and to the somewhat limited income of a country attorney and counsellor-at-law, to commence the day with a hand-to-hand struggle with the furnace fire.

The open season on furnaces is from October to May. In the language of the lawyer it is from *on* or *about* the first day of October to *on* or *about* the first day of the *ensuing* May.

This elastic description allows for the uncertainty of our New England climate which is

> "Variable as the shade
> By the light quivering aspen made."

But for a full seven months in the year I shovel coal, and thriftily sift ashes, and painfully and daily climb out of the furnace room with huge hods of ashes that represent an enormous daily consumption of coal, with somewhat negligible results in the way of heat (so my wife says), and dump the same in a growing heap just off the driveway.

There is a somewhat fascinating element of chance in my daily emergence from the furnace room. If snow has fallen heavily or the drip from the eaves has frozen during the night, I find it practically impossible to lift the bulkhead doors from below, even though I hump myself to my utmost. To secure peaceful egress I am obliged to go out by the side door and to remove the obstruction by the timely assistance of snow-shovel, ice-chisel, or hot water.

Occasionally articles foreign to a bulkhead are left there, and after straining every nerve in a bloodvessel-bursting effort to lift the bulkhead doors, I find, on further examination, a misplaced cord of wood, or the rear wheels of a heavy cart, or a mammoth pile of unbeaten rugs resting peacefully on my only direct communication with the open air.

Even when I have succeeded in blazing a trail from the furnace room to the ashpile I am by no means confident of success. The decline from the

I can throw a heavy coal hod, filled with hot and blinding ashes, to a far greater altitude than any man half my age

bulkhead to the driveway is ofttimes slippery from ice and frost, and accidents, terrible accidents, will happen. And yet there is an element of profound satisfaction in these accidents, painful and humiliating though they be. This is at least one of the accomplishments in which I am proud to say I am far more expert than in my youth and young manhood. I can fall quicker, more frequently, and with far greater violence, and injure myself much more fatally than I ever could when a young man. And I can, I am sure, throw a heavy coal hod, filled with hot and blinding ashes, to a far greater altitude than any man half my age, and receive a greater proportion of the contents upon my person than any man in the neighborhood, and, I believe, in the town, county, or state.

Let me see, I believe I was talking about a bluebird. Well, I heard one to-day.

Monday, March 11, 191–. I heard that bluebird again this morning and experienced the same thrill, although I had, but a few minutes before, made the horrifying discovery that my furnace fire had gone west during the night, and I was steeped in coal dust to my ears, and abraded, from clinkers, to my elbows.

None the less I was thrilled at the delightful sound, but with the sole difference that the thrill

was less permanent, and as Alexander Selkirk is supposed to have remarked in smoothly flowing measures —

> "But alas! recollection at hand
> Soon hurries me back to despair."

So I craned my neck until it creaked, looked and listened until more sordid duties called me, but did not see the bluebird. But I saw the sun coming up above the huge, naked elms to the east of my house and turning the frost to gems of silver and gold, and I heard the bluebird.

Tuesday, March 12, 191–. This morning was cold and raw and overcast. I did not hear the bluebird. I feel as if I have made no progress whatsoever and that the future is the reverse of roseate. I feel very much as did the agricultural gentleman who admonished his hired man as follows:

"'Terday 's Monday, 'n' termorrer 's Tewsday, and th' next day is Wednesday. Haff the week gone an' not a dummed thing did."

There are few sadder sounds than the scraping of a shovel on the floor of a practically empty coal bin. I must order some more coal.

Wednesday, March 13, 191–. The sun came out this afternoon and I saw three crows slowly flying northward. I am sure they are the same crows I have seen all winter, but there seemed to be

something springlike in their hoarse voices. I suppose spring is really coming, but its effect upon joints rusted through age is extremely slow. Still it is a most hopeful sign to hear a bluebird. I wish I might see the little chap.

Thursday, March 14, 191–. Spring has surely come, for this morning I *saw* that bluebird. He was inspecting a hole in the limb of an apple tree in the garden and warbling as if he liked his job. Of course he will not bring his mate and build there. Bluebirds seldom do build in the tenements they examine so carefully in early spring. He praises the view from the front window, and inquires if the roof is tight and whether or not the chimney will draw, but he seldom moves in. As he warbles I can almost hear him say, "Of course you will paper and paint all the rooms and moresco the ceilings, and put hardwood floors in all the rooms on the lower floor and in the two front chambers, and, let me see, we must have electricity in place of, or rather in addition to, gas, to run the vacuum cleaner, and the range must be thoroughly overhauled and the furnace gone over, and oh, I forgot, the coils are a disgrace and must be gilded or silvered and the front steps must be painted in some attractive color."

Of course I am ready to promise anything if he will lease the tenement for the season, but I am

convinced that he will not. Later on he will bring his mate and she will want everything that he forgot, all of which I will readily promise. But in the end he and his mate will nest in a hole in a pasture post or in a dead apple tree there. They are the most indefatigable, delightful, and wholly unreliable house-hunters of the birds.

Later the robin will come and lease a crotch in a limb, a projection under the porch or a hollow at the apex of a bent branch, and build his adobe hut while the bluebirds are still house-hunting; the chippy will engage quarters in the pear tree, the crabapple tree, or the cherry tree, and build its shallow nest of the long hairs from a cow's tail.

They ask little of their landlord but the right to build, upholster, and furnish their tenements.

The golden robins arrive still later at about apple-blossom time, realizing, of course, that there is little competition with any other family of birds for the bending tips of lofty branches where they build. All they ask is a tall elm, a gracefully bending branch, and a supply of yarn, twine, and ravelled clothesline. With these they are content and grateful. They do not refuse other articles that may be woven tastefully into their nests, such as a bit of *honiton guipure* or *honiton appliqué*, valenciennes, or real Irish lace, a silken garter, a billet-doux, a promissory note or a two-dollar bill.

But I am really getting far ahead of the season. It is March and snow is still deep in the woods. Truly one swallow may not make a summer, but one bluebird will awake a host of memories.

Friday, March 15, 191–. A damp, heavy snow is falling. The bluebird has departed, temporarily, I hope. The snow has brought the jays from the depths of the woods. I do not know the reason, but a damp snow usually brings out the jays. A score of them are screaming in a big oak tree behind the house.

The storm will be brief, for a long storm keeps them in the deep woods.

I am thinking of farming a bit this spring and summer. I tried it several years ago for a year and derived the greatest pleasure and mental and physical benefit possible from it. I gladdened the hearts of dealers in seeds, bulbs, cuttings, immature trees and shrubs, sulky ploughs, lawn-mowers, potato-diggers, hoes, rakes, shovels, incubators, plain and fancy fowls, vermifuges, deodorizers, caponizers, blooded cattle, rat poisons, ferrets, mangel-wurzels, and root crops of all kinds and natures.

I furnished a target for shafts of bucolic wit from every rural acquaintance, and finally I wrote a book about it which I have never been able to find in any standard library since.

But I had a good time and spent a good deal of money, which, as it was my own and honestly earned, is no business of any one but myself and the members of my own family.

Farm fever is very like hen fever and the effect of undue familiarity with poison ivy. Once contracted it is recurrent. I really believe I feel the symptoms.

Saturday, March 16, 191–. It cleared at dusk last night and grew colder. This morning a bitter, searching wind is thrashing the dark green branches of the pines and firs and sending down showers of needles and cones. Not a bird in sight. Even the English sparrows are hidden under the eaves in the deserted pigeon and poultry houses. My symptoms of farm fever have abated. I am morally certain that the bluebird has fallen a victim of his unseasonable visit.

The wind is due north and from the heart of an iceberg. I have an extra supply of ashes this morning and hurry to the ash pile to escape the bitter cold. I have wound a knitted scarf around my neck. It is my daughter's scarf. She should not have left it in the kitchen. I hurry across the driveway, passing under a wire clothesline. The wind whips the ends of my scarf around the line and ties them in a hard knot. I am suddenly plucked into the air by the neck. My heels are

higher than my head and the hod higher than my heels. I instantly disappear in a swirling cloud of coal ashes. I strongly resemble a whooping crane emerging from a silvery cloud on a Japanese fire screen.

When the mists have cleared away I find myself firmly tethered by the neck to the wire like a bulldog or a halter-pulling horse, while my hat and the hod are merrily bounding across the field in a neck-and-neck race, preceded by a diminishing cloud of ashes. I disengage my neck with vast difficulty and gingerly try it to see if it is broken. It is not. Merely elongated a bit. In time it will probably shrink into shape. But I no longer think of farming.

I wish I lived in a city in the heart of a community heating plant.

Sunday, March 17, 191–. It is Sunday and warm and the bluebird is back. Indeed I have seen two. When I tried amateur farming a few years ago I looked forward to Sunday as a sort of clean-up day. I always gave my cow and horses an extra rubdown and extra feed. I swept the barn and the stable floor, occasionally washed a buggy or soaped and oiled a harness, and in short had a good time.

I always timed myself so accurately that when the church bells burst into a joyous carillon, and

sober citizens in black and citizenesses in brave array, leading, preceded, or followed by sulky-faced and rebellious-eyed boys in knickers, Eton collars, and shoes of wondrous sheen, and little girls in white and lace, with plump legs upholstered with short stockings and embossed with mosquito-bites, and carrying Sunday-School Quarterlies and Daysprings under their arms, are pacing solemnly to church, and my wife and daughter, clad in rich, expensive, and plain but elegant frocks (if either of these ladies ever reads this diary, I shall pay dearly for this), I am covered with dust, dirt, wheelgrease, or harness oil, unwashed, unshaven, and ready with persuasive assurances that I did n't do it purposely, but really there were so many things to do and I did n't feel able to hire a man to do them, for if I did they could n't dress as well, which argument always sends them off stiff-legged with indignation and closes the conference.

It was wrong, very wrong. That my religious training forces me to admit. But it was very delightful. A sunny day in March with the remaining snow melting in the sun, a bluebird warbling, a hen cackling in the hen yard, a cow with her head thrust out of a barn window lowing her delight at the returning spring — what is more delightful? The mud may be inches deep; the grass dead, gray and soaked; the garden a tangle

of last year's weeds; but the sun and the sounds and the smell of the earth, and the little gray bird that threads the maze of dead grasses like a sprite make one's heart as light as a boy's.

To-day I opened all the barn doors. They had not been opened all winter. It was mouldy in smell, and dry and dead and dismal at first, but in a short time the sun and fresh air had made a wonderful change. I really think that old houses and barns die of grief when left untenanted. Why not? I am sure I should.

The farm tools hung up in the harness room and stored in corners seemed like old friends. I have the symptoms, I am sure. I believe I will try it. I may be able to do something at it. Why not? Every farmer thinks he knows more law than I do. I do not think a farmer ever came into my office for advice but frankly admitted that he knew more than I did about it. Quite a number of farmers who have employed me in legal matters have said openly and without reservation that they would have done better to have managed their affairs without my assistance.

One husbandman said I was too damned expensive for him. I did n't quite catch his point of view, for, inasmuch as he never paid me a cent, it seemed to my somewhat opaque understanding that he was too damned expensive for me.

Farmers are as a rule honest, hard-working, shrewd, and able men. But they have some peculiar traits. I think as a rule the ordinary farmer feels sure that the case he entrusts to his lawyer is the only one that lawyer ever had or ever will have. Three years or more ago a farmer, whom I may not have seen before, enters my office and takes advice as to the conveyance of a farm. To make the title clear a third party must sign a quitclaim deed. The party's name is Mary Jane or Esther or Maude. Taking my instructions from the farmer and my law from his superior equipment, I draw the necessary papers and make timid suggestions as to the proper execution. He takes the papers back to his home, a score of miles away, and the matter passes out of my mind. At the end of the week I have forgotten his existence. To-day, after the passing of three busy years, he appears at my office and imparts the information that Esther or Mary Jane or Maude refuses to sign.

I am naturally somewhat at a loss to understand, and as he acts for all the world as if he thought I was to blame for their refusal, I have been known to ask somewhat profanely as to who in hell Esther might be and what in hell she refuses to sign. And I may, if I feel in the mood, explain good-naturedly that I am sorry, but I really don't quite know who he is and am com-

pletely in the dark as to the identity of Mary Jane or Esther or Maude.

The result is the same in either case, for he emphatically declines to have any further business relations with a lawyer who has so poor a memory as I have, and indignantly takes his affairs and those of Mary Jane or Esther or Maude to a real lawyer for settlement.

Another thing of frequent occurrence is to have a farmer drive up in a motor that I should n't be able to buy and operate if I had no bills to pay for the next ten years, and enter my office at about 12.30, when I am just changing from my office coat to go to my noon dinner. He enters with a shrewd twinkle in his eye and with the words, "I thought I would catch you before you left for dinner."

I resume my office coat and he sits down with the utmost deliberation. Then he brings out a pile of bills and receipts and a probate account, so mixed up that it requires a couple of hours' hard work to disentangle it, which is made more difficult by the necessity of explaining everything and nearly going to the mat with him on every point.

At the end of an hour, knowing that the chaste frugality of my home dinner has been made more so by the fact that the dinner is stone-cold and my wife probably red-hot at my unexplained

delay, I telephone her that I am delayed, which really is rather stale news under the circumstances and elicits a reply of marvellous coldness considering her quite justifiable temperature, to the effect that I might have had consideration enough to have let her know earlier so that she might at least have eaten her dinner while it was hot.

I am in a mood to reply warmly, but a quarrel through a telephone is too much like making faces at an enemy, and I have all I can do to keep my temper with my client.

At the end of another hour I am tortured with visions of juicy roasts, and fat fried oysters and inch-thick steaks and French fried potatoes and mince pie and cheese, coffee and cigarettes, and I would give a dollar and a half for a drink of water.

In a half-hour more black specks are floating before my fevered eyes, my head is swimming like a gyroscope, and I could n't for my life distinguish a promissory note from the seventh commandment, and I call a halt and inform my client that I must get a cup of coffee and a sandwich before going on, and invite him to go to a restaurant and have a social snack.

And when he attempts to dissuade me on the ground that he is in a hurry, and it transpires that at half-past eleven he ate a hearty dinner because "he 'lowed 't would take me consider-

able spell tew wurk it aout 'n' so he tuck his dinner a bit arly so ez to ketch yeou afore yeou started for yeourn," am I to blame for telling him to take his damned account to hell with him? Am I to blame?

And yet they say I lose business on account of my ungovernable temper.

Monday, March 18, 191–. I got a seed catalogue to-day. Is it merely a coincidence or can the people that get up seed catalogues read a man's mind? I wonder. At all events, I received by mail a most ornate catalogue. To-night I will get a chance to look it over. I have a half-dozen uncut magazines and a new box of Pall Mall cigarettes. I only smoke them on special occasions. The receipt of a seed catalogue at this particular time is a special occasion. I shall put aside the magazines and pay strict attention to the seed catalogues — and the cigarettes.

Tuesday, March 19, 191–. I believe I will begin by buying pigs, b'goshamity! I have read in a magazine of the tremendous scarcity of pork, and, indeed, of all lubricants, due to war demand. Indeed, it has come to such an acute stage that people in France, Germany, and Belgium eat soap whenever they can lay hands on a bit of it.

Owing to the skyrocketing of prices of pork,

lard, and bacon, we may be in the same plight. It does not seem to me that I could come to the point of eating or inviting a friend or casual visitor or client to partake of a course of different preparations of soap however appetizingly cooked and served.

Still, one never knows what one can do under the spur of compulsion. Time was when an olive would pucker my mouth up until it resembled the stem end of a tomato. Now I love them. It was difficult for me to really relish salad oil or salad dressing on quartered oranges or hothouse grapes. *Entre nous*, I don't quite fancy it now, but I can eat it with a smile when my back is to the wall and there is no way out.

In spite of this I may enter a restaurant or attend a banquet of

Queues de Coq carboliques
Soupe aux suds de Savon Moû
Roti
Savon de Castile Roti au goût de la Reine
Entrées de Savon "It floats" et "Have you used Pears"
Salades
Au Cuticura, et Goudron Anticeptique
Suds Frappés de Savon Commun
Petits Gateaux de Savon
Demitasses de Savon Liquide

Now any man with a particle of Americanism in his make-up will do anything to avoid such a contingency, and never shall it be said that "I

seen my duty and ain't done it." I will build a pen and buy a pair of infant piglets and watch them grow, and thus serve my country.

Wednesday, March 20, 191–. This morning I ordered some boards, heavy wire, posts, spikes, and wire nails to be delivered before noon. This afternoon I left the offices to my son and partner, who is really a much better lawyer than I am, and has a higher opinion of the value of the firm's services than has his father. So it is a pretty safe bet to leave things to him. But when it comes to farming and the care of domestic animals — well! what that boy does n't know about such things is appalling, simply appalling.

I started in this afternoon to build a pen. I used a large double stall in the horse stable. To fence it in I used a door from the shed, nailed lengthwise across the opening. We take the door off in the spring. It was too long by about six inches, so I sawed six inches from the lower end.

It made a very good fence, just high enough to rest one's elbows on comfortably to see the pigs eat and grow. I am becoming quite a carpenter as well as farmer.

I suppose I may have to, nay, shall have to put that door back in the fall to keep the shed warm. The six-inch aperture at the bottom of the door will be very convenient to afford ingress or

egress for the house cat. I have always objected strenuously to adopting a house cat, but it looks as if some explanation of the abbreviation of that door will be in order when my wife sees it next fall. I wonder if much cold will seep in through an aperture six inches by thirty-six. Perhaps a scrim or a sash curtain or some kind of a barrier or windbreak arrangement may be devised. This is a time when ingenuity must be encouraged. At all events, I need not worry before November next, and many things may happen before then.

Thursday, March 21, 191–. I think I contracted a slight cold working on the pigpen yesterday. This morning I was as stiff as a slice of baker's bread toasted. I thought it would wear off if I started work. So I arose earlier than usual and put in a couple of hours' hard work with a post-hole digger. So far the remedy has not proved efficacious. I am, if anything, a good bit stiffer to-night than I was this morning. I did n't suppose it possible and I used the strongest possible illustration. If there is anything stiffer than baker's bread toasted, I am it.

I am thankful there was no police court to-day. I am sure it would have gone hard with offenders.

I ordered my pigs to-day unsight and unseen. I feel sure they are remarkable animals. I am

to pay enough for them. I think I will go to bed earlier to-night for I am to have my pigs delivered to-morrow and it will be a milestone on the road to farm life.

Friday, March 22, 191–. Sciatica! If I — ouch! — could — ow! — oee! — turn over without a — Holy Christopher! — damn derrick, perhaps I could — hell and repeat! — get up out of this dud-dud-damn bed and — whew ee! I can't do it.

Saturday, March 23, 191–. In bed with a red-hot fishhook being pulled to and fro in my hip joint every time I move.

Sunday, March 24, 191–. Sunday again. Still in bed, with a March blizzard blowing. I always thought it a great treat to be comfortably ill in bed and to have a good novel to read and a beautiful snowstorm to look at through the window. I have attained the bed and the snowstorm, and I may have the novel for the asking, but as I cannot bat an eyelash without setting a thousand devils gouging at my hip joint with red-hot darning needles, it cannot be said that I am comfortably ill.

Rheumatism may be a proud inheritance of the agriculturalist as gout is an heirloom of the rich and great, to be handed down from generation

to generation, but I want none of it. I will quit farming forever. Damn farming, anyway.

Monday, March 25, 191–. I am confident that my wife and daughter are laughing at me. Of course I have n't actually detected them or caught them red-handed, but they have a gallus expression when, my endurance strained to the breaking point, I yield to the relief of progressive profanity.

Tuesday, March 26, 191–. The storm is over and the sun out. I felt a bit better to-day and managed to sit up in bed. It was hard and painful, but my triceps have not entirely forgotten the parallel-bar training they had in college. I think possibly I may be able to get out by fall.

Wednesday, March 27, 191–. Still in bed. This afternoon the D'Indy Club met in the music-room. My wife said it would entertain me, and if I did n't mind she would leave my door open. I did n't mind. The D'Indy Club is a very correct institution. Its members are all musicians. There can be no doubt of that. They plead guilty to the charge. They meet frequently. After hearing their recital this afternoon I have no hesitation in a frank but modest statement that they meet altogether too frequently.

They aim to interpret the modern composers,

but as a club they have no healthy contempt for Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Bach, Schumann, Schubert, and other worthies of the past. To-day they are going to play Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony," arranged for two pianos and violin. All the morning skilled and expensive artisans have been tuning my wife's piano to harmonize with my daughter's, and have been striking single tones with a cursed persistence that somehow connected with my rusty and inflamed hip joint until I felt out of tune with everything under the canopy.

This finished, rude truckmen came and moved the library piano to the music-room and shook the house violently, to my exceeding torture. However, this afternoon I shall hear the "Unfinished Symphony" in B Moll.

Schubert is said to have written over six hundred songs. Some are beautiful; some are of such a nature that I am convinced that in his last hours the thought that he would be quit of them was an inexpressible comfort to him.

This afternoon the doctor came just before the club members began to arrive and administered an opiate to guard against too much musical enthusiasm. I invited him to remain, and he replied that it looked very much as if he would have to, as there did n't seem any way of getting out without running the gantlet.

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1410 L Avenue
La Grande, OR 97850

After fifteen minutes of running up and down stairs by the members and leaving wraps and settling themselves in comfortable chairs to listen, the symphony began with a short *andante molto expressivo*, played on one piano. At the end of about a dozen measures the other piano came in with a few thunderous chords that somehow did n't seem to belong there. The doctor, who had fortified himself with a strong black cigar, jumped as if he had been shot and bit his cigar completely in twain.

I jumped and hurt my hip joint outrageously, and howled. "Doctor," I said, when the pain had subsided, "there was just a *soupçon* of *embonpoint* in that *fortissimo* that veiled the *leit motif* of the *sostenuto*."

"Humph!" said the doctor, and after feeling of my pulse, administered eight grains of chloral.

The symphony went on *raucoso et grandioso*. Suddenly there was a concerted crash of chords in contrapuntal dissonance and rapid chromatique of eight facile hands and eighty agile fingers.

"The *chromatico contradictio* of that *bravura* passage is *piu decisamento* for the *post-mortem*, Doctor," I said lightly.

"Humph!" again said the doctor, casting a keen professional glance at me, and arising he administered an opiate in whiskey, incidentally taking a four-finger snifter himself.

The players then wandered or rather galloped into a *mélange* of tonal contradictions in which the *ne plus ultra* of the *chaconnade* seemed to be altogether too *ben marcato* for the *sub rosa*. I so remarked to the doctor, and he took his stethoscope from its case and examined my chest carefully and thumped me between the shoulders in excellent *tempo* with the four pianists, until I begged him to desist. The doctor took another drink and lighted another black cigar.

I listened. To my untrained ear it seemed chaotic in the extreme. If, I thought, music is the rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic expression of inner thought, what in Heaven's name had Schubert done to require such expression? Knowing some of his songs and something of his life story, I naturally looked for some theme of tender sweetness.

In one passage for the violin I felt that it was coming, but both pianos swooped down upon the violin and buried it under miles of furious sound.

I glanced at the doctor. He was sitting in an attitude of a man that had lost all hope and was expecting the worst.

"Doctor," I said, "don't you think the subcutaneous injection of the *appoggiatura* rather more *strepitoso* than *stringendo?*" I always like to adapt my conversation to my listener and I flattered myself that I had attained a *musico-*

medico flavor that would flatter him, but the doctor favored me with a baleful glare and meaningly reached for his needle, whereupon I sank back upon my pillow and said no more for several minutes, until some utterly chaotic and frenzied harmony moved me to remark that the *nouveau riche* of the *ensemble* interfered with the perfect *adagio* of the *demi-tasse*.

This was too much for the doctor, and he forced me to swallow a large brown pill that tasted like a fishhouse at the beach and from the effects of which I fell into a dreamless sleep.

It was dark when I awoke. I must have slept for hours. The symphony was still going strong. I know now why he never finished it. He did not live long enough. Nor would have Methuselah. It was the nearest approach to perpetual motion I had ever known. I looked for the doctor. He still sat by the window. He had aged visibly. Suddenly the music ceased. It had not been finished, but merely postponed. The players had become exhausted. The applause was generous, but to my mind was not in the same class with the fervent "Thank God!" of the doctor.

The members trooped off chattering their thanks for "so delightful an interpretation," and I wondered. Wondered how the man that wrote the "Rosamunde Overture," "The Serenade," and the "Elegie in G" could have written such

an outrageously unmelodic, dissonant, chaotic mess as the "Unfinished Symphony," and the more I wondered the more suspicion grew. Could it have been —? But no, a thousand times no. The members were all talented musicians, and well read in musical literature.

I breathed my suspicions to the doctor. His sombre, tortured face lighted up. "Hell!" he said; "that may be the reason."

Obeying my directions he slipped quietly down to the music-room and brought back the two pieces of music from the two piano racks just as the players had left them.

They were both of the Leipzig edition of Peters. Here it was:

Für Pianoforte für Acht Händen.
Bearbeitet von F. N. Kirchner.

And, shades of the old god Pan! The arrangement on one piano was of Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony," and on the other was "The Awakening of the Lion," by Chevalier DeKonski.

"God!" said the doctor, slapping his knee. "The D'Indy Club!" Then he quietly slipped down the stairs again and restored the music to its proper place on the piano.

Thursday, March 28, 191–. I have felt better today than for a week. I am afraid in the past I have not been considerate of my horses. It al-

ways seemed to me unreasonable and inexplicable that a driving horse should frequently go so aggravatingly lame when one was taking his best girl for an afternoon's drive in the merry and much-lamented days when a motor-car was a thing unknown, and its ridiculously inadequate predecessor, the horseless carriage, a thing universally ridiculed and scorned.

And I am very sorry to say that the ordinary treatment accorded a bog or bone spavin-infested nag was a few stimulating cuts with an ivory-handled horsewhip and a loud and threatening "G'dap!"

Had I known then as I know now just how a spavin felt, I am sure I should have been more considerate.

Eheu! me miserabile; peccavi! peccavi!

"The mills of the gods grind slowly."

I am really very sorry about it, but I will say this, not in extenuation, but to show that I am not now, and never was, wholly bad: I never cut a horse with a whip, or jerked his bridle, but that after the first flash of anger was past, I gave him a better feed than usual, an easier drive, or a thicker bed of straw.

I may ride to the office in an ancient curricle known locally as a hack to-morrow. My son's theory of driving his runabout on our village roads is that the more the old man is in the air

during the trip the less wear there is on the cushions, and I have known smoother roads than ours, and so to guard against a possibly fatal relapse I will try the curricle. It will take infinitely longer, but I shall feel safer, less hurried, more at ease, less addicted to youthful athletics that are unseemly, undignified, and positively dangerous at my age, such as high hurdling, ground and lofty tumbling, cartwheels and flippers.

I shall arrive safely. The only approach to a runaway ever attained by an Exeter hack horse has been its occasional inability to hold back when going downhill, and from my house to my office is but a gentle slope.

I expect some day to be obliged, in my magisterial capacity, to fine my son and partner heavily for speeding, but I do not want to have a complaint entered for a trip made with me as a passenger.

Friday, March 29, 191–. Went down to breakfast this morning. Much easier than the return trip will be. Dick went down in his car at 8.30. At nine the curricle came round. I climbed in stiffly, being forcibly reminded of Burdette's rhyme:

> "Over the fence a gray-haired man
> Cautiously clim, clome, clem, clum, clam."

About halfway to the office the horse fell down, broke a shaft, and refused to rise. A crowd gath-

ered, and while some sat on the horse's head the others assisted the driver to unharness him and persuade him to arise, in which operation a lash whip and much profane encouragement were called into action. After he was resurrected the driver led him away, leaving me seated in lonely and somewhat majestic state in a curricle of the Pliocene period, infested with peculiar and awesome smells. There was a strong taint of mouldy blankets, an aroma of cold T. D. pipe, the subtle, but penetrating fragrance of rubber boots, a perceptible *nuance* of whiskey sours, and over all the breath of decrepitude and age.

It is a unique experience, but open to any one who wishes an absolutely novel thrill, at the very moderate price of twenty-five cents.

I had been fuming for a period of fifteen minutes, which seemed to me an hour and a half at least, when a fresh hack drove up. I am entirely wrong. It was not a fresh hack. There are no fresh hacks in Exeter. They are all very stale. Sometimes the hackmen are a bit fresh, but never offensively so.

This was a two-horse hack, evidently a relief expedition sent out by the proprietor for the dual purpose of retrieving me and assembling the twenty-five cents fare.

I thankfully climbed out and clome in, and had

just settled myself as comfortably as the circumstances and my condition permitted, when the fire gong boomed an alarum. At the first bellow the whip descended on the back of the hack horses and away we tore.

Having lived in Exeter all my life, I knew that these horses had a solemn duty to perform — to haul Hook and Ladder Truck No. 2 from its station on lower Court Street, which was rather farther from my office than the scene of my shipwreck. And I further knew that my friend the hackman would perform his sworn duty as a public officer, notwithstanding any expostulation and even if it took a leg, which in this instance meant my leg.

Were I a United States Senator rushing to make a quorum; were I a physician speeding to the relief of a man with a severed artery, or a child with membranous croup; were I, in fact a placid corpse, decorously immured in a satin-lined casket and followed by a long line of stricken relatives and friends, one and all wondering how much life insurance I held and whether or not my dependents would be enabled to live in enervating luxury and soul-destroying sloth or be obliged to go to work — that faithful hackman would drive like Jehu to Hook and Ladder House No. 2, there to unhook his panting cattle and to leave me to curse and unavailingly

protest, or to fester by the roadside, according to which character I might represent.

And so, knowing his loyalty to duty, I merely sought to brace myself to avoid, as far as possible, the jolts, bumps, and shocks of the swaying curricle. I was doing very well, indeed, thank you, when, on turning into Court Street, a prodigious bump over a frost-heaved section of the road caused the entire bottom of the hack to fall out, and without in the least knowing how I did it, I found myself with my head and body upright inside the body of the hack, my hands frantically but vainly clawing for some purchase, while my rheumatic feet and sciatical legs were drumming a vigorous and *prestissimo* rataplan as I instinctively legged it to keep pace with the bounding hack.

In my boyhood, when pursued by the watchful minions of the law for youthful misdemeanors not unconnected with melon patches and sweet apples, cherries and strawberries, I made some fast time, but I do not think I ever ran more fluently and with less friction. This was no half-hearted performance. My burning ambition was to keep up with that hack, for I knew that unless I did the sharp edge of the rear spring would cut me in two like a cheese. Luckily the remaining distance was not great, and we all came under the wire going strong. I really think I completed

the last hundred yards in rather less than nine seconds flat. I shall try to have my performance registered as a speed record. Of course the fact that I was trotting with a wind-shield and was paced by two runners may deprive me of the honor. But how about Mile-a-Minute Murphy? And he had a specially built track, while I ran on the frost-heaved and muddy roads of a New England village.

As soon as the hackman arrived at Hook and Ladder House No. 2 he pulled up his horses, and before I had crawled out from beneath the vehicle (I had to take this method of egress, as both doors were hermetically sealed and could n't have been opened without an experienced safe-breaker with a jimmy and a can of blasting powder), he had hitched his horses to the truck and was off amid intense excitement, while I, with hat crowded to my shoulders and with shoes and trousers splashed with mud to my ears, walked to my office simmering with indignation.

My first thought was to sue the proprietor for a million dollars, but as my sciatica had miraculously departed, I began to feel as if I ought to reward the hackman for his loyalty and devotion to public duty by a present of a generous sum. Nothing but the lack of money and the knowledge that I had lost a week's time from the office prevented me.

Saturday, March 30, 191–. Robins have come. This morning there were a half-dozen on the lawn. As I went to the office I heard a purple finch. I expect my pigs to-day. Feel as well as ever and got in an hour's work on the outdoor pig-pen. I am handicapped by frost in the ground. I can dig only about so far and then have to wait for the frost to melt. The weather is wonderful for March. She surely is going out like a lamb.

Sunday, March 31, 191–. Sunday again. A good day for working in the yard and barn. I laid out the garden to-day on paper. I have decided to have a sort of omnibus garden. At least three plantings of corn in succession, so that I may have corn on the cob from August 20th to November.

Also early and late cabbages, celery, chard, Brussels sprouts, potatoes, turnips, carrots, endive, beans, both pole and bush, peas early, late, and sweet, and several other kinds of vegetables, both surface and subterranean.

When I got through I had a map that closely resembled the Balkan States in revolution.

I have understood that the summer growth of pigs is greatly stimulated by a balanced ration of vegetables. Time will tell. There will be no need of a balanced ration until I get those pigs.

Monday, April 1, 191–. I got word to-day that my pigs were at the railroad station. I at once sent an expressman for them. Gave up an appointment with a client to meet and escort them to their indoor pen, which I had littered with fresh straw. Thought some of getting up an address of welcome.

N.B. The word "littered" is singularly appropriate for pigs. Was it a mere coincidence or is it a word of prophecy? I wonder.

I hung round all the forenoon. I think if I went to the roadway and looked up and down the road once, I did fifty times. It is all well enough to be an amateur farmer, but it is not a paying proposition to neglect business appointments.

At 11.45 received word by telephone from the expressman to the effect that there were no pigs at the station and asking me if I knew what day of the month it was.

Tuesday, April 2, 191–. No pigs to-day. Raked the lawn for an hour. It is astonishing how many valuable articles are lost during the fall and winter and how valueless they are when found the next spring. But it is interesting as a sporting proposition to find them.

I found two pairs of scissors that my wife had fairly made life a burden over; my penknife that I had accused all the other members of my family

with losing; a pair of tortoise-shell (imitation, I am afraid) frames surrounded by small fragments of glass, which my wife had darkly intimated that some one knew about if he could be made to tell; and several other articles. The knife and scissors were rusted and ruined. The tortoise-shell frame (imitation, I am sure) I purpose to place where my wife will find them and then think she was the one to blame. Later on I will casually mention the fact. It will have to be extremely casual, as her suspicions are easily aroused.

No pigs to-day.

Wednesday, April 3, 191–. The fine weather continues and new birds are coming daily. The roads to the country are fearful. Yet the man of whom I bought the pigs lives next door to the railroad station.

Thursday, April 4, 191–. Got letter to-day from man with whom I had made appointment saying that he had engaged Scammon and Gardner to attend to his business hereafter, and that if I would be good enough to turn his papers over to them he would be very much obliged, etc. That is unfortunate. He was a good client. I would give something to know who played that April fool trick on me. Serves me right,

I guess; at least Dick says so and I guess he knows.

Friday, April 5, 191–. Weather turned to sleet and rain. Hope pigs will not come until storm is over.

Saturday, April 6, 191–. The rain held up this morning, but the wind blew strongly. Just as I had dressed to go to the office the expressman drove in with my pigs. I told my son to leave me, and further said that I would be down in a short time and I went out to take out the box.

The pigs are beauties. Clean and white and a bit rangy. They were a bit wild, as was shown by their crowding away from me to the farther side of the box.

The expressman drove to the wide space in front of the barn intending to turn his horse and to back the team so that we could with little difficulty put box and pigs into the inner pen. This was a clever idea, but in turning he cramped the wheel a bit too much and the wagon tipped at such an angle before I could steady the box that it fell out with a crackling crash, broke open and discharged its cargo of pigs in a two-acre yard open to the general public on the north, and to the abutters on the east and west.

I suppose the general trend of thought in the

mind of every person has a powerful effect in his mental development and the resulting physical phenomena.

Now I had for years dreamed both waking and sleeping dreams of heroic actions wherein I had fought and conquered bullies, caught and stopped runaway horses, thrown myself before railroad trains and snatched beautiful maidens from awful deaths, dashed into burning buildings and rescued helpless children from living cremation, dove into white water fathoms deep and rescued more and more beautiful maidens, and in short lived up to the best traditions of Nick Carter, Old Cap Collier, and other dime-novel favorites.

To be sure I had never in my life had actual opportunity of testing the result of such a trend of thought until these my own pedigreed pigs were so unceremoniously dumped into my presence. But the subsequent events showed that years of intensive training had borne fruit, for at the first staccato grunt of the escaping pigs I had thrown myself in fullback style, regardless of mud, upon them and by great good luck succeeded in catching one just below the gambrel joint, which is a sort of natural handle to the animal.

Heavens! I never imagined so small a pig could squeal so loud. For a moment I thought I had hold of a full-sized, sixty-horse power tug-

boat whistle. It could be, I am sure, and was, I have little doubt, heard in several of the surrounding towns. Had the pig let out a squeal of moderate strength of purpose, say not louder than a fire-alarm gong or a circus calliope, I might have been startled just enough to let him go, but as it was I was sufficiently shocked and momentarily terrified to hang on convulsively with a grip that nothing could break, and to the great admiration of the expressman, rose with the shrieking atom and carried him to the barn and dropped him safely in the deeply littered pen, where he speedily forgot his troubles in rooting amid the straw.

Then we turned our attention to the fugitive. The expressman, who was fat and jolly, gave as his opinion that we had better ring in a fire alarm and call out the department, but I told him not to worry, but just to watch me. He asked me if I had ever seen a little pig run. I said no. He then said I was in for a surprise. I asked him in turn if he had ever seen me run. He said no. I told him that both he and the pig were in for a surprise. He was sufficiently frank to say that if I could run as well as I could dive, I was all right. I said nothing, but smiled meaningly as I thought of the new century record that would soon be chalked up under my immortal name.

We found the fugitive pig in the middle of the

garden, and as we approached he trotted toward a corner in the fence. Holding our arms outspread we gradually got him in a corner, when he became uneasy and acted as if he meant to dodge out between us. Of course, as we were at the base of the triangle and the pig at the apex, we had to cover much more ground than he, and we did it with the greatest agility and grace.

Every time the pig would start a rush we would yell like hyænas and dance to and fro with widespread arms and great action. At first I contented myself with old-fashioned dances such as the Polka Mazurka, the Varsovienne, the Hop Waltz *à trois pas*, the Glide Waltz *à deux pas*, the Sword Dance, and the Highland Fling, while the expressman, being from the nature of his employment something of an Indian, affected tribal dances such as the Fire Dance, the Snake Dance, the Scalp Dance, the Corn Dance, and let out especially piercing war-whoops.

Finally we penned the little villain in the corner, and we slowly advanced breathing endearments and ready to grab him. Suddenly he darted for our legs and we both grabbed for him. A blinding flash and a sparkling coruscation of meteors blazed before my eyes, followed by a loud, humming sound, and I found myself, when the fireworks subsided, sitting in a pool of mud, holding on to my head with both hands, and

blinking at a bewildered expressman in a similar position.

"What in hell are you trying to do?" he demanded sulkily.

Having no suitable answer ready, and realizing the entire justice of his inquiry, I asked him what in hell he thought *he* was trying to do, whereupon he grinned and said, "How about that pig?" I had totally forgotten the very existence of the pig, but scrambled up rather gingerly, for my head still hummed like a top. My expressman, having a harder head than mine — at least I do not see how anything could be harder than his, and I distinctly remember feeling my head cave in when his ox-like frontlet struck it — arose slowly, and we scouted round until we found the pig in the dense bed of rosebushes garnished with steel-like thorns.

As no person could penetrate this thicket and emerge with a shred of respectability or anything else, we forbore to enter, and tried to drive him out with stones, but did not succeed. Then we got a couple of bean poles, and after poking at him a long time without success the expressman finally landed him a jolt in the short ribs.

The pig let out a sharp squeal and dashed for the open road at a speed I never saw equalled by an animal so small. Although I was fifty feet nearer the street than he, I had the greatest diffi-

culty in heading him off, and only succeeded when I tripped and fell at full length in the muddy driveway while the pig dashed back into the corner from which he had escaped.

I was shaken to my foundations by the fall and my clothes were a sight, but I was not nearly as helpless as the expressman, who took the opportunity to laugh in a most unfeeling manner over my misfortune, to such an extent that I really thought he would burst a blood vessel, and sincerely hoped he would.

When he had recovered we again tried to pen the infernal pig in the corner.

This time we decided that we would not dance round or solo dances, but would see what we could do with square, and so, to keep that small but openly defiant animal from breaking through our cordon, we danced most of the measures of Lady Washington's Reel, the Tempest, Lancers, Sicilian Circle, Plain Quadrille, and Portland Fancy, and we Ladies Chained and chasseze and forward and backed and right-hand-to-partner-grand-right and-lefted and all-hands-rounded — all to no effect, for when that pig decided it was time to get out of his *cul-de-sac* he shot out like a flash of lightning, leaving us staring foolishly at him as he disappeared behind the barn.

This time we sat down in the sun and smoked a cigarette and talked the matter over without

heat. We were both about played out from our unusual conviviality. I had not danced for thirty years and over and the expressman had not twirled a foot for at least ten. At last we decided that if we expected to catch that pig within a week we should have to finesse a bit.

Suddenly a thought struck me with force. Why not try a slip-noose? In my boyhood a slip-noose had been a doughty weapon. Under its blighting and sinister spell, when at night, with noose-end carefully spread on the sidewalk in some quarter of the town where the feeble and flickering rays of the old-fashioned gas-lamps did not reach, and with the other end firmly tied to a tree, a fence-post, or a picket, business man, peasantry, aristocrat and proletarian, preacher and man-about-town, "doctor and saint" went down in turn; and "I heard great argument," mostly of a most blasphemous and profane nature, as the victim removed the noose from his leg and cast about in all directions, like the hunting hound, to discover, overtake, and destroy the "dashity dash blankity blank who done it."

In a moment I procured a loaf of bread and a long, strong cord. Making a slip-noose I placed it flat on the ground by a corner of the barn behind which the pig was rooting with the utmost unconcern. Placing a few pieces of bread in and around the noose, I withdrew to a distance

and waited with the end of the cord wound round my wrist.

In a few minutes he appeared round the corner of the barn, perceived the bait, and trotted eagerly up to it. The instant a foot entered the noose-ring I pulled, and he was caught, and amid a most terrific squealing I hauled him in hand over hand, and in a moment he was comfortably lunching with his sister pig on the bread I threw into the pen. Then having given the expressman all the money I had, on receiving which he looked somewhat disappointed, I went into the house to change my clothes. I called my wife, but received no reply. I listened, and, hearing unintelligible sounds from the library, I entered and found my wife in a state of collapse on the lounge. It was not serious, but as I found I could get nothing but inane giggles, I rather dignifiedly went to my room. It simply shows that there are some people in the world who would laugh if you fell downstairs and killed yourself.

I was an hour late or more at the office.

Sunday, April 7, 191–. The pigs are all right today. I think the racing pig will tame in time. When I poured their milk into the pan they got as far from me as possible, but as soon as I got out of the pen they climbed into that pan, snout, eyes, and all eight feet. They are real pigs. They ate

three square meals to-day. I have ordered two more quarts of milk a day. At twelve cents a quart. I remember when local milkmen raised the price from four to five cents and we prophesied a financial panic. Well, those pigs are worth some sacrifice.

Monday, April 8, 191–. Had a dozen or more two-horse loads of manure dumped on my croquet ground, tennis court, and last year's garden. I intend to spread it myself. Bought a manure fork for $1.25. The last one I bought several years ago cost sixty cents. My wife does not appear to appreciate the necessity of fertilizers to stimulate production, and goes about the house closing doors and windows, with her nose at an angle of forty-five degrees.

Tuesday, April 9, 191–. Worked an hour before breakfast spreading manure. The sun was shining, it was warm, and an immense flock of purple grackles filled the big oak tree at the foot of the garden. They did not alight in my garden until I had finished work and had gone to my bath, where from the window I saw the ground was literally black with them.

What a cheery, hustling, chatty, friendly, talkative crowd they are. Occasionally they have sharp little disputes and fly into the air a few

feet, pecking and clawing, but like the duelling of cock robin it is mostly fencing with buttoned foils.

I had a farmer's appetite for my breakfast, although we had no cream in our coffee. I had given the milk to the pigs.

I have an idea that my wife is not wholly in sympathy with my agricultural aims. She as much as said that golf would give me as much exercise as farming and stock-raising. From my experience at the reception given my pigs yesterday, I think I am in a position to demonstrate the fallacy of her argument. I have played golf and have a deep admiration and a sincere respect for it as a game, but agriculture, even as a fad, is an occupation, most interesting and delightful, and is a game that occasionally demands the instant exercise of all one's physical, mental, and moral powers to the *n*th degree. Golf, from my experience, is a leisurely stroll through a sheep-infested field, accompanied by a few choice friends and a freckled-face boy, and interrupted at times by sudden clouds of dust and bursts of hideous profanity.

Profanity is only incidental to agriculture, but is a recognized ingredient of the game of golf.

Wednesday, April 10, 191–. A gray day with a sharp wind. Last year's leaves are flying. Saw

no blackbirds or robins to-day. Even the gray squirrels that for the past week or more have been digging up nuts buried last year, have disappeared.

Kipling has made Mowgli say, "Last year's nuts are this year's black earth." This may be so in India, but not in New England in early spring. I have dug up many in past years while spading my garden and they were very palatable.

There is a chill in the wind that made my hour of manure-spreading really necessary to keep me warm.

The pigs keep nearly buried in the straw of their pen and only come out long enough to eat their warm mush and milk.

By the way, if they drink so much milk now, what in the world will they do when they are hogs? It looks to me as if my pork will cost me about forty cents a pound. Well, I shall know what it was fed on. It gives me a curiously comfortable feeling on a cold or raw day to see small pigs feed until their bodies are as tense as a full-blown football, and then burrow almost out of sight in clean straw. It is really worth paying forty cents a pound for pork of this sort.

Thursday, April 11, 191–. Snow came last night and to-day is bleak and wintry. The wind still

blows and there are no birds in sight. I wonder when they feed?

Did my hour of manure-spreading this morning. I was a bit stiff in my arms at first, but it is wearing off slowly. I would like to demonstrate to my own satisfaction that as far as the average man is concerned Dr. Osler is either a damn fool or a damn liar.

Pigs are all right. I really think they are growing.

Friday, April 12, 191–. To-day is a spring day. Did my stunt at spreading. Also tried spading. The spade struck frost at about six inches, and brought up no earthworms. Saw a flock of blackbirds, also robins and bluebirds, and heard a purple finch and a golden-winged woodpecker giving its mating call.

I wonder if farmers, as a rule, notice these calls. I have dealt with farmers for thirty-five years, but have seldom heard one speak of birds and spring flowers. Perhaps they feel that nature is out of place in a law office.

It may be that spreading manure, and fencing pasture, and getting out cordwood, and shearing sheep, and loading hay and bullwhacking spoil a farmer's appreciation of nature and kill his interest in birds and squirrels and fish, and the different shades of green in a spring landscape

and of crimson in a spring sunset, and in the song of a white-throated sparrow or a wood thrush.

I hope not, for if I thought that the little work I propose doing in emulation of our merry farmer, who "jocund fares him afield," will have the effect of causing me to stare unmoved at a sunset, to forget to watch and delight in the bounding flight of the goldfinch, to listen unenthralled to the eerie song of the wood thrush from a dark green wood in the early twilight, I certainly would renounce farm life forever. I would renounce the delights of pig-raising, the delicious intoxication of hoeing beans, potatoes, and cabbage, the calisthenics of spading gardens and spreading manure, and go back to my law office and writing and live the quiet life of a man who does not like to work, but is obliged to.

The pigs are very well, thank you.

Saturday, April 13, 191–. Warm and sunny. Finished spreading manure this morning. My wife says she thinks it about time, thereby showing lack of sympathy with my ambitions. Must really make some arrangement about our milk supply. Sour milk appears to be a household necessity when it comes to flapjacks and other confections. And my wife very pertinently remarks that those pigs get all the milk before it has time to sour. I find myself facing a domestic crisis and

probable famine in the way of flapjacks, corn, rye, and buckwheat cakes and muffins. There must be some way out of the difficulty. I cannot sacrifice my wife and daughter, and at the same time my heart goes out to my pigs.

Sunday, April 14, 191–. I would like to know where I left that plan of the garden I made some time ago. I do not believe I could make another just like it if I were to try all the season. I really wish people would let my things alone. Did no work of any amount to-day, but read agricultural and stock magazines most of the day. I wonder if I have made a mistake in not choosing Ayrshire pigs instead of Herefords? I don't think so, but even if the result may not be as encouraging as I hoped, I would not exchange my pigs for a pair of any other creed or belief however recommended.

Monday, April 15, 191–. This morning I tried the spade again and brought up earthworms. That shows that the frost has gone, at least from the sunniest parts of my garden. I turned over a good-sized patch this morning. I am intending to plant peas as my first crop. I am told that the only way is to buy some seed peas in bulk, because the paper packages contain so few. I heard of a man who bought a box of pills and a package of

seed peas, and after disposing of both packages was utterly at a loss to recollect whether or not he had planted the pills and taken the peas. By buying peas in bulk I will at least be spared this worry.

Tuesday, April 16, 191–. The burning question appears to be whether I shall plant giant or dwarf peas. The giants require bushing, while the dwarfs do not. The bushing requires time and labor, which is a black eye for the giants; but the dwarfs require one to bend over or to squat down to pick the peas, which is a black eye for the dwarfs. I feel like the man of middle age and not very active habit who strolls through a wood or pasture and comes to a fence that is a bit too high to climb over easily and a bit too low to crawl under without back-breaking effort, and finds it so difficult to make up his mind which to do that he goes no farther.

However, *I* shall go on. It will be one or the other with me — but I cannot say for the moment whether it will be giant or dwarf.

Wednesday, April 17, 191–. It has been a day of showers and sunshine. Showers when I went down to my office without an umbrella and sunshine when I bought one at an exorbitant price to shelter me on the way home.

I wonder which it will be, giant or dwarf? Honors are even so far. I believe there was once an ass that starved to death between two bundles of hay. I believe that history repeats itself. I wonder if I am to furnish proof of the same.

Thursday, April 18, 191–. While making up my mind about which kind of peas to plant, I spaded up another considerable patch of garden. I believe the second planting will be beets. It may possibly be the first. I remember a song which, years ago, concert singers of mediocre taste and talent used to render and at times rend:

"She stood between love and duty."

Happily I have forgotten the melody, if indeed it had one. Unfortunately I have also forgotten the *dénouement*. If I knew whether love or duty landed the bewildered lady, perhaps I might be guided in my decision as to what family of peas to plant, Brobdingnag or Lilliput.

Friday, April 19, 191–. Have been so busy at the office to-day that I did no work on farm or garden. There is always the kitchen fire and the furnace, and ashes to sift and wood to bring in and coal to shovel, until, but for the fact that I am slightly knock-kneed, I should be bow-legged like a pair of calipers or the forelegs of a well-bred bulldog.

Saturday, April 20, 191–. No flapjacks or muffins for breakfast. Extreme drouth in the sour-milk department. Situation becoming acute. Toast is all right in its place, but like the grasshopper it may become a burden. Of course those infernal pigs have got to be fed, and at their age milk appears to be the basis of their bill of fare.

But at the present price of milk, twelve cents, my pork will cost me something appalling in money, and unless something is done pretty soon in the way of pouring oil on troubled waters, a domestic upheaval will occur, and domestic upheavals are fearsome things as every lawyer and police magistrate knows only too well. I shall be obliged to send out an S.O.S. call to some agricultural friend. Luckily I have a good many friends among the bucolic fraternity, all or most of whom consider me a joke.

No flapjacks or muffins to-day. Starvation has set its teeth in my vitals. Nothing on the table but bacon and eggs and toast and coffee.

Sunday, April 21, 191–. Sunday again and a pleasant day. I think I have solved the problem of the sour-milk, flapjack, corn-muffin famine. The first farmer I consulted yesterday told me to buy skim milk and buttermilk by the gallon from the delivery truck of some creamery. I promptly ordered a gallon per day, delivery in

two-gallon cans three times a week. Cut down my milk supply to two quarts a day. The compromise has let so much sunshine into my household that I am forcibly reminded of the school song we used to sing so shrilly years agone:

"There is beauty all around
When there's love at home,
There is joy in every sound
When there's love at home.
Peace and plenty here abide,
Smiling sweet on every side;
Time does softly, sweetly glide,
When there's love at home."

This crisis avoided, I shall now have more time to devote to the mooted question of peas.

Some people say that peas are a delusion and a snare. Perhaps so. Pigs are growing fast and we are becoming excellent friends. They no longer shrink from me with loathing, but are gradually acquiring a liking for my society, and it might be called a taste for me, which impels them to nip choice morsels from my legs whenever opportunity offers. Of course this has to be discouraged by firm if stern measures, for I have no intention at my time of life to be, in a way, reincarnated as pork.

I think I kicked Galatea a strong ten feet yesterday when she had literally taken a "hog bite" from the naturally tempting calf of my left leg.

I forgot to say that I have named them "Pyg-

malion" and "Galatea," and call them "Pyg." and "Gal." in ordinary conversation.

Whitewashed the inside of the henhouse today in preparation for fresh eggs. My day of fancy fowl raising is past. From this time utility is the word. Plymouth Rocks, white or barred, or buff; Wyandottes, silver penciled, white, buff, or Columbian; Rhode Island Reds, rose or single-combed. The best are none too good for my farm.

Monday, April 22, 191–. Turned over another patch of garden this morning before breakfast and raked the other two patches. The creamery man brought a gallon can of skim milk this morning. He left it on the sidewalk. I had to carry it to the barn, fully fifty yards. It seemed unreasonably heavy. He says he has decided that he cannot let me have less than eight gallons a week in two deliveries at the sidewalk. He says I can carry it in as well as he. I argued that it was his duty to deliver it at the barn. He said, rather rudely, that he did n't give a damn whether it was his duty or not, but that if I wanted the milk I would have to take it at the sidewalk. And so, as I did want the milk and wanted it very badly, I was forced to submit.

How true it is that

> "Man's inhumanity to man
> Makes countless thousands mourn."

However, a day of reckoning will surely come. It is a most comforting thought to every lawyer in a country town and community, that if he continues in practice long enough, he will be sure to have an opportunity to take a retaliatory whack at whosoever does him an injury or drives a sharp bargain. There is no truer saying than

> "He who sows the wind
> Reaps the whirlwind."

And so to prevent myself from becoming lopsided I carry the can half the distance with one hand and half the distance with the other.

The pigs are doing wonderfully well. I have as yet not made up my mind about the peas. Think if pleasant to-morrow I will plant a few beets. I am afraid I am encumbering myself with serious problems. The question of peas and fowl is likely to make strong demands upon my judicial faculties. I think that to base a decision in so important a matter upon the flipping of a coin is the mark of a weak and untutored mind.

I feel sure that mature deliberation will result in a wise decision. It is well to take time, but not too much.

> "The Bird of Time has but a little way
> To flutter — and the bird is on the wing."

I will try to think it out to-day at the office.

Tuesday, April 23, 191–. "It has been a day of triumph at Capua," but not wholly so. I am at once elated and cast down. I have decided the matter of the peas, and I am sure the decision does credit to the practical working of my mind. I have decided to plant both giant and dwarf peas. I will plant the ground I have already, and with great toil and pains, dressed, turned, and raked, with both kinds of peas. I will later weed, hoe, and bush the giants and thoroughly cultivate the dwarfs.

Then when ripe I will persuade my wife, with subtle flatteries, and compel my daughter, by stern parental command, to pluck and shell the same. Is not this a fair division of labor?

I was very much pleased to have arrived at so eminently just and fair a decision.

But I was much grieved to lose a client in a most curious way. I have recently installed a new typewriting machine in my office. The presiding goddess of the machine had written a letter from dictation to a Mr. J. Smith, a gentleman who in early life had suffered the loss of one leg at the hip, and who is, not unnaturally, very sensitive about his misfortune. The young lady was unused to the new machine and struck the figures "¾" instead of the initial "J." both in the address in the letter and on the envelope.

I had been absorbed in working out a decision

in the peas question, and when the letter was brought to me for signature did not notice the error and the letter was sent, bearing my sign manual, directed to

Mr. ¾ Smith,
—— N. H.

To-day I received a letter from the maddest man in the United States, and containing material calculated to curl my hair and bring out goose pimples all over me. I explained as well as I could, but I feel sure he will never believe I did not do it intentionally.

I cannot blame him a bit. It was infernally appropriate. Verily a keen sense of humor sometimes puts a man in a most unpleasant position. I am quite cast down over the thought that he believes I would do so dastardly a thing. If he would only see that the joke was decidedly on me and not on him, he would believe me innocent as a babe unborn.

Wednesday, April 24, 191–. Frost this morning. The new grass was stiff with it. The largest flock of grackles I ever saw passed over this morning. It took fifteen minutes for the flock to pass.

It sounded like a thousand sewing societies discussing a new type of *lingerie*.

Intended to plant peas to-day, but a bit too cold. Hope to be able to do it to-morrow.

I am amazed at the growth of my pigs and am constantly reminded of Alice in Wonderland when she ate the magic cake and instantly grew so rapidly that she had to put one foot up the chimney.

When I bought these pigs they were almost microscopic in size, but with appetites that would shame a boa constrictor. The main difference between the pigs and the boa constrictor, apart from their architecture, is in the fact that the boa constrictor eats one huge meal once a month or so, and the pigs eat three huge meals a day, and the weary hours between meals are employed by them in rooting out light refections and in protesting raucously when the supply does not equal the demand, which it never does.

Naturalists say that the common robin redbreast daily snakes from the bosom of Mother Earth a thousand and odd worms and feeds them to her young. But *Merula migratoria* is a dub, a piker, an "also ran," to the man that single-handed tries to minister to the endless wants of a couple of miniature, and daily growing less so, pigs. I am that man, and I feel sure that I am bound to achieve a record for devil-may-care daring.

I believe that no man in this country of rapidly

increasing population and expanding needs ought to be allowed to own a farm and lot without putting the same to some practical use, such as keeping a cow, or pigs, or fowls.

There should be some law to impose this as a duty upon the owners of real estate. In the early days of this part of New England when lands were allotted to citizens, just about land enough to pasture a goat was given to a bachelor, while a lot capable of pasturing several cows, a dozen sheep, etc., was allotted a man who had given hostages to fortune. In many ways our forefathers were greatly our superiors and worthy of imitation. It is really not too late. It is a simple matter of patriotism to keep a cow and a flock of hens. If, however, a man is bold to recklessness he should keep a pig. If he fears neither man, beast, nor devil he should keep two.

Thursday, April 25, 191–. While I have been so occupied over my garden, and my carefully drawn plans thereof which I unfortunately lost or had stolen from me by some envious and abandoned person, the spring weather has brought an amazing growth to my lawns, of which I have a numerous and varied assortment, and this morning I realized for the first time this year that the grass, upon such of my lawns as are not to be ploughed under, needed cutting very badly. Ac-

cordingly I hunted up the newest of my three lawn-mowers, in the society of which I had in years past travelled, in twelve-inch swaths up and down my premises, a distance of at least three times across this continent in its widest part, now smoothly bowling along amid a shower of closely clipped clover, witchgrass, sorrel, jimson, pig- and ragweed, now stopping abruptly with my stomach brought suddenly and violently against the handle-bars as the machine vainly tried to bite off a length of wire, an oyster shell, a rusty currycomb, a piece of crockery, or some other article that had escaped the prying teeth of the rake.

Of course the entire squad of lawn-mowers that I had sent at the end of last season to the machinist for an overhauling, had broken down during this winter of enforced inactivity. One would n't budge, although I drenched it with oil; the second ran with great smoothness, but the knives did not revolve; the handle of the third was loose and the screw-holes so worn that I could not tighten them.

So I was obliged to order a new one. I was grieved, but not surprised, as it has been my custom to do the same for years. A habit is easily acquired and difficult to get rid of.

The lawn-mower is a wonderful invention, and for many years I have sedulously cultivated its

acquaintance with enthusiasm in the first growth of the lawn grass. As spring and summer waxed and waned my enthusiasm sensibly and progressively abated, until at the close of the season I had become so ding-bustedly tired and sick of pushing that machine over those lawns, of raking, wheeling out, and burning the refuse, of painfully kneeling on gravel walks and clipping the borders, that I declared I never would push a lawn-mower again in my life.

And yet, so strong is habit that at the advent of the spring grass my enthusiasm returns, and I buy a new and expensive lawn-mower to take the place of the one warranted by the dealer, and but a year ago, to last as long as I should.

Sometimes I am forced to conclude that dealers are a bit over-charitable toward their wares, and over-enthusiastic in their description of their many excellences, and especially of their durability. It may be that a local dealer, knowing my undeserved reputation for physical and mental slothfulness, is justified in representing and warranting his goods to last as long as I shall last, but it is never safe to make an unconditional statement of the kind, because no mere man can safely disregard the consideration of influences and powers of a collateral nature that may work a mighty change in one's habits.

And when a dealer makes such a representa-

tion or warranty, he should be brought to the bull-ring of public censure if he fails to make his warranty good.

But I have never known a dealer to toe the scratch. Whenever I call one's attention to the matter, he says the trouble is in the pinion. I do not know now, and never have been able to tell, what a pinion is. I thought it was something that birds, especially eagles and white doves of peace, used to fly with. In the oratorio of "The Creation" I have heard eminent vocalists sing

" "On mighty pinions."

If Haydn had lived in the age of lawn-mowers and had for several years bought lawn-mowers, he would never have used the word in that connection.

Of course, not knowing, and being utterly unable to find out, what a pinion is, and being utterly in the dark as to the proper spelling of the word, I may be miles off the track.

But of one thing I am certain, a pinion in a lawn-mower is something that is responsible for every ill incidental to lawn-mowers, and that the dealer is not responsible for any warranty, however strongly expressed.

Friday, April 26, 191–. Planted lettuce and beets to-day. According to the pictures in the seed

catalogues I shall have to harvest my lettuce with a scythe and my beet greens with a sickle. Later on, with help, I may be able to lift one of the beets at a time. Possibly I shall have so increased my strength by hard and continuous labor that when the beets are ripe I shall have no difficulty in harvesting them.

I have two large cellars separated from the furnace room. So I feel sure of having room enough for my crops. It will not do to plant too many. Cabbages to-morrow.

Heard and saw some meadow-larks in the field behind the house. Also saw the first swallows to-day, of the barn variety, with their beautiful deep blue backs and white breasts tinged with scarlet. Their arrival spoke very plainly of summer.

Some tiny warblers in a tall maple tree kept up the most delightful singing and twittering all the time I was working in the garden — beg pardon, on my farm. I hated to quit work, even to go in to breakfast. Pigs are growing beyond belief. I do hate to lug that four-gallon can twice a week.

Saturday, April 27, 191–. No new birds to-day. Bought a baker's dozen Rhode Island Reds to-day in laying form. It will be a treat to have fresh eggs. I wonder if I shall miss the thrill of

Their arrival spoke very plainly of summer

uncertainty that one feels when breaking a store egg in the morning, the wondering whether you will throw the egg, cup, and all out of the dining-room window, or go out of the window yourself.

Sunday, April 28, 191–. Had to work in office all day. Worse luck.

Monday, April 29, 191–. My R.I.R. hens have not come. Rather looked for them to-day. Planted a few short rows of cauliflower; also Swiss chard.

I am thinking of doing something with sheep. Saw a literary farmer friend of mine to-day, and he suggested that I buy a cosset of him. I said I would think of it. I am doing it now, but I have about decided to try it. There are certain elements about the industry that appeal to me strongly. Although individually the domestic sheep seems a rather tame proposition, yet I am convinced that the possession of sheep is not wholly without its moments of excitement — intense excitement at times. I have been thoroughly convinced of this from something that took place to-day.

After talking with my literary friend I thought I would make some inquiries of another friend who lives a few miles from Exeter and has long been interested in sheep.

Accordingly that afternoon, after I had cleared my desk, I got my son to take me out to his place. On the way I told him about my intention to cultivate a few mutton chops and listened with some amusement to his rather disgusted remarks. Just as we drove into my friend's yard he was driving a long line of cattle and sheep from a field or paddock to the barn. At the head of the procession was a ram, a magnificent specimen, with magnificent horns curving like twin French horns, a thoroughbred, high-stepping gait, and the most beautiful golden eyes in the world.

It reminded me most forcibly of Seton's "Krag," the Kootenay ram. I burned to possess it. The ram headed the procession as by the divine right of kings, and my friend brought up the rear, carrying a goad stick. Seeing me he waved his hand, called to me to wait, and went back to the house.

As the procession neared us, a handsome Holstein heifer tried to cut in ahead of the ram, whereupon that gentle and harmless animal shook his head, curved his neck, executed a few dainty and well-executed dancing steps, shot forward and struck that luckless heifer so lusty a blow in her stomach that she resounded like a bass drum, let out a hoarse bla-a-t of pained remonstrance, and with promptness withdrew to

her proper place in the procession. Just then my friend came out and greeted me. I got down and told him I was interested in sheep and wanted to know something about buying some.

Somewhat to my surprise he said he had no sheep to sell, but would sell the ram. I replied that I was afraid he was rather too lively a contract for me to undertake, but was promptly informed that the animal was a perfect pet; as gentle as a kitten; and to further assure me he went up to the animal, rubbed his splendid head and patted his shapely flanks, and "'lowed" with much homely imprecation that "one of them there turtle doves was a bald-headed eagle" in comparison with "thet there ram." As he said this he went to get his milk pails, all the while talking volubly about the extraordinary and unprecedented docility of the ram.

I was interested to observe that the cans and pails were ranged in rows under a corn house supported upon piles about three feet from the ground, a very neat arrangement affording perfect shelter with plenty of country air.

To get the cans he was compelled to go down on all fours and to take them out one by one. The width of the space was about twelve feet, and in order to reach some of the more remote cans his head and shoulders entirely disappeared beneath the building from which his voice still

poured forth pæans of praise of the dove-like meekness of the golden-eyed pacifist.

At that very moment the ram became interested, probably from the rattle and clang of the milk pails. I also became interested in the ram. I observed with amazement that he was making the same preparations that heralded his attack on the cow, and noted with satisfaction that these preparations were directed, not at me, but at my garrulous friend still crying the saint-like virtues of the ram.

This time, owing perhaps to the reduced size of the target — which, however, was big enough in all conscience — the preparations were on a more careful and pretentious scale. The ram was evidently plotting the range and allowing for the variation of wind, tide, and phases of the moon. Instead of a few delicate steps he danced the complicated snake dance of the Ojibways. Then he slowly curved his massive neck until the iron frontlet was in exact line. Then he slowly backed a few yards, quivered a moment, and —

Now I realize perfectly well that as a decent, law-abiding citizen, as a humane man, as a kind neighbor, I should have warned my friend of his danger. I was very much to blame in the matter. But then my friend had assured me with homely asseverations that the animal was a sucking dove

of peace, a very Quaker in his policy of non-resistance and non-aggression.

Had I warned him he would have laughed at me. Perhaps he would have been angry and I might have lost a friendship; perhaps we might have been embroiled over the matter. As it was, he did not laugh at me, nor was he angry with me, and I did not miss the show. And so, as I would not have missed it for many times the price of the ram, I conclude that I took the wiser course.

As I was saying, the ram quivered a moment and then shot forward like an express train at all of my friend that remained in sight. There was a thud, a grunt, and a terrific clangor of milk cans, and my friend disappeared like a flash, instantly to reappear with unabated speed on the farther side of the building, preceded, surrounded, and followed by a resounding, clanging, and echoing cloud of tin cans, while the ram, somewhat mystified over the abrupt but sonorous disappearance of his victim, shook his head doubtfully on the hither side.

In the early seventies a troupe of acrobats known as the "Japanese Jugglers" came to Exeter. The youngest, smallest, and most expert of its members was known as "Little Allright." One of his feats was to take a flying start and dive through a barrel series of hoops, in which had been fastened lighted candles, without extin-

guishing them. It was a feat that called forth the most unbounded enthusiasm, but if my friend could stage his performance with the ram, the corn house, and the milk cans, he could become, without the slightest doubt, one of the foremost vaudeville artists of the day.

But then, come to think of it, to withstand the nightly shock of that ram, he would require so much padding that I am quite sure he could n't pass under the corn barn. Certainly not through a barrel.

So I have not yet bought any sheep, but am on the lookout for gentle animals, warranted not to bite.

Tuesday, April 30, 191–. My determination to raise sheep had dated from a somewhat recent experience in the goodly town of Boston. It happened not long ago that I found myself one evening in that somewhat cosmopolitan village clad in evening clothes of a somewhat *passé* cut and style and gasolenely odorous.

I have forgotten just what occasioned my presence there. My impression is that I had been engaged at the eleventh hour to fill, or to try to fill, the place of some speaker who was unavoidably absent. I feel quite certain that this was the case, for I do not recollect any invitation to speak when it was otherwise.

I have no fault to find with the motives of the committees in withholding their invitations until it is morally certain that no other speaker can be obtained, but I do criticize the abruptness of the notice that gives me scant time to gasolene my veteran evening clothes and to blacken such parts of my underclothing as might otherwise shine with a white radiance through the moth-holes.

At all events, whatever the reason, I found myself at a late hour on a downtown street of Boston, in evening clothes, with the rest of the night at my disposal and with a dire longing for generous food and drink, which fact is of itself convincing evidence that I had been attending a Boston banquet.

I had long desired to eat a generous and genuine English mutton chop and to drink a mug of musty ale, like the heroes of Dickens and of Thackeray. Evenings at home after a frugal meal of toast and fried potatoes I would find myself reading of chop-houses made immortal by these masters, and feeling as if I had not eaten a square meal for a month.

So I decided, after a careful review of my financial condition, that the time had come for a gustatory bender, and I sought and found a famous grill where one was allowed to select his particular chop and to superintend its preparation; and

after exercising profound judgment in the selection I took my seat at a side table and buried my face in a pewter of foaming ale. Now I had never drunk ale, and had never seen any musty ale before, and so I trust that no lover of brown stout or of malt in any form may take my criticism of that particular brew of musty ale as a general condemnation of malt stimulants. My first introduction to the genus ale should have begun at the bottom of the ladder.

Dickens's and Thackeray's roysterers always took a long pull at the pewter. Men in evening dress and in business suits at other tables were doing the like, and I did or tried to do the same thing. It was the toughest pull I ever took at anything.

I got down one mouthful by extraordinary effort and hastily replaced my pewter on the table trying to avoid shuddering myself out of my chair. The taste reminded me very forcibly of Moxie with a generous infusion of mothballs and an equally generous admixture of soft soap, nux vomica, and coal tar. A liking for it is, I am sure, acquired only after acts of protracted heroism of which I am, I fear, incapable.

Before I had wholly restrained my impulse to make a hurried adjournment to the outer air in search of a convenient and comparatively deserted alley, the waiter, a smooth-shaven man

with a sliver of short whisker in front of each ear, to counteract, if possible, the effect of his long upper lip, said in accents that rendered perfect his cockney disguise, "Yez chop, sor-r-r — Yis sor-r-r — Thank yez, sor-r-r" — and withdrew to respectful attention while I began on the chop, hoping that it might act as an antidote for the taste of the ale, but finding to my dismay that it tasted of the wool, owing to the fact that they had been so closely associated for so many years, as the English seldom kill under five years of age.

Be that as it may, this particular chop tasted as if it had been fully five years since it had been dissected, and the combination of the flavors of hops, mothballs, soft soap, wool, oil, nux vomica, and coal tar was rather too much for a country stomach accustomed to corned beef, cabbage, boiled onions, tripe, and other simple fare, and I was forced to leave before the repast was finished. Outraged nature could stand no more.

Before I left I summoned the waiter and also summoned all my fortitude as he brought my bill. It was needed, I assure you.

People in faints have been revived by being made to inhale the smoke of burning feathers, and an overseer on the plantation of one Simon Legree ran a pin to its head into a fainting woman with prompt and satisfactory result. Drunken

men are sobered by vigorous slaps in the face or by being drenched with pails of ice water.

But no more efficacious scheme was ever devised by any one than the bill for my chop and ale presented by that waiter. I gasped, stuttered, but paid it and stalked out in high displeasure to think it over. But I reflected that all around me were men and women nightly paying such prices for such food; and it struck me then that any farmer, amateur or otherwise, could do no better than to cater to their peculiar appetites. I then and there registered a vow to high heaven that should I ever get the taste of that nauseous combination out of my mouth and memory to such an extent that I might turn a part of my thoughts and attention to other aims, I would raise English mutton chops for profit solely, and perhaps in the ample income derived from the business I might in time forget how they tasted in combination with musty ale.

Wednesday, May 1, 191–. May Day!! I think the words deserve at least two exclamation marks, each one a thrill, for I still feel a thrill when the day comes round. It is not wholly a reminiscent thrill, although apart from the delightful feeling that

> "Der Mai ist gekommen,
> Der Winter ist aus,"

and that for at least five happy months I shall have a vacation from shovelling coal, sifting ashes, and from spending the greater part of my waking, and a considerable part of what is supposed to be my sleeping, hours in the furnace room, reminiscence and memory produce a very decided thrill.

May Day! — when we used to walk leagues in the woods to gather Mayflowers with which we filled small baskets, adding for generous weight, molasses gibs, striped stick candy, and, last of all, mottoes in pink letters on a white candy lozenge, and hung them on our at that time best girl's doorknob, rang the bell and fled, but not too far to observe what happened.

And it was happiness when that particular divinity came to the door and took the basket with her own fair hands and sent a smile into the darkness, which nevertheless reached your heart and sent you home the lightest-hearted boy in the world.

And what misery and wretchedness when her brother came out and with coarse laughter appropriated the refreshments and put them where they would do the most good — at least to himself — and then either threw the flowers away or used them to make up a basket for his own particular divinity, while you retired vowing that you would "everlastingly lick the peagreen stuffin' outer him the next day."

And then there was the May fair which the Unitarian Society, even in those remote and almost prehistoric days, had yearly celebrated since the Devonian Period or the Upper Silurian.

And in those days it was regarded as a serious misdemeanor, in fact almost a felony, for a father to neglect or refuse to take every member of his family, able to walk or ride, to this fair and to blow them to the finest supper ever served in the world, with escalloped oysters and cold chicken and tongue and ham and lobster salad and hot rolls and mashed potatoes, and three kinds of ice-cream and a different kind of cake for each one, and tea and coffee.

Other church-fair suppers had brown bread and beans and oysters, and mince and apple and squash and lemon and Washington pie, all very well in their way, but not in the same class as the May fair suppers. And then there was music and dancing and games and — well, how can one who has had these delightful experiences help feeling a thrill when the day comes round again?

To be sure it is not the same thrill, because business, or rheumatism, or laziness, or increasing flesh, or corns prevent one who is approaching threescore years from going after Mayflowers and from making and hanging May baskets.

One may still go to May-fair suppers and enjoy them, too, but not with the zest of boyhood

or of youth. Alas! that it is so, but one may be thankful for the thrill that May Day still brings. One may still go out and listen to the song sparrow and the pewee. I did this to-day and it was a delight, and then I spent an hour in setting out early cabbages and cauliflower, which was also very pleasant, as was the fact that my lettuce and peas are peeping through the soil, and my Rhode Island Reds are scratching and prating cheerfully behind their wire fence, and are really laying eggs that taste so differently from those I put down in water-glass last fall and which have lasted until now. Long live May Day!

"You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear;
To-morrow 'll be the happiest time of all the glad New Year,
Of all the glad New Year, mother, the maddest, merriest day,
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May."

And when I read it I could picture a certain young lady in that very schoolroom, a young lady with a plaid dress and balmoral boots and white cotton stockings, as a radiant young Queen of the May, radiant beyond any Queen of the May, before or since.

Thursday, May 2, 191–. Yesterday I was reminiscing. To-day I was brought back to practical

things with a round turn. It was almost a shock. It was a shock. My creamery man brought in his bill. I looked at it and then at him. My face must have betrayed amazement when I looked at the bill, and reproach, sorrow, and indignation when I looked at him.

I tried to wither him with a glance. He did n't wither worth a cent. I doubt if I could have faced a man with a bill of that size without betraying uneasiness. It is said that "a guilty conscience needs no accuser"; that in itself should have caused his eyes to droop in shame before my accusing glance. But his eyes drooped not a droop, but gazed at me with the utmost coolness. Then he said, with what seemed to me uncalled-for familiarity:

"Well, sport, do I get my money?"

"You'll get kicked off my place if you don't cut out your fresh talk," I answered.

"I'm not on your place," he answered with a grin.

That was true; he was on the sidewalk and I felt a bit foolish for my sudden heat.

I like the familiarity of my friends, like to have them call me by my first name, but nothing riles me quicker than the familiarity of a comparative stranger.

I had intended disputing the bill and refusing to pay because he was evidently putting a high

price for the unquestioned antiquity of his sour milk and buttermilk. Antiquity is a valuable asset when possessed by furniture, spirituous liquor, cheese, and violins of the right make, but it is seldom a desirable quality for food of any other kind but cheese.

But having lost my temper I no longer had the opportunity or desire for cool and stinging sarcasm, which would have been, I am sure, lost upon him.

So I paid an outrageous bill, emptied the can into a tub, returned the can to the man, and told him I was through. Then I made up my mind that the only way out of the difficulty was in the prompt purchase of a cow. I felt something as when a boy, fearing to jump off a shed roof, throws his hat down as a sort of encouragement and then follows it even at the risk of breaking his legs. And so when I fired the creamery man I knew that I was merely throwing my hat off the shed roof and must, by all the rules and tenets of boyhood and manhood, follow that hat or be forever disgraced.

My pigs must have milk, and either I have got to buy a cow or recall that infernal creamery man and submit to his fatal freshness, for I feel sure that it will either be fatal to him or to me, and the uncertainty of it is what drives me to a decision. I will, I *must*, buy a cow. Let's see, to-day

is Thursday. To-morrow I have a case to try, and as I am the only one that knows this particular case I cannot very well shove it onto Dick's shoulders. I really must keep law and farming distinct. The law practice seems necessary both to maintain me and the expenses of farming. I think I will get the doctor and his wife to take us out into the country on Sunday afternoon, if pleasant, and I will buy my cow. The farmers do not observe the pasture custom of waiting until May 20th with their own cattle. And in the afternoon I can make a better guess as to the milk condition of the cows. Then if I make a trade I will have the cow milked in my presence and see just what she gives and how she milks.

Having settled this question I fed my pigs. They are coming along finely and already when they stand up against the fence, squealingly awaiting their milk, their heads come nearly to the top of the fence. With the unlimited quantity of fresh milk I shall undoubtedly have from my new cow, they will improve wonderfully. Of course I shall keep the cream for the family and give the skim milk to the pigs. This, with a little middlings, and bran, and wheat screenings, and corn meal, and shorts, and stock feed, and tankage, and ground oats, and boiled potatoes, and green stuff from the garden and farm, and table waste, will make an inexpensive food for them

and a mixture that ought to furnish every necessary ingredient for the rapid and healthy growth of good pork.

Then again the expense for the keep of a cow in the summer season must be negligible. With the clippings from such of my lawns as are not to be ploughed up, I ought to get the most of her feed. And this, supplemented by a little soy-bean hay and clover, and a few feeds daily of various kinds of stock feed, and oil meal, and gluten, and cotton-seed meal, and green stuff from the garden, and cornstalks when ripe, and pumpkins and carrots cut up into small and non-chokeable pieces, will keep her in the best of milking condition.

It seems perfectly, even ridiculously simple. Feed her generously and she feeds the pigs. One hand washes the other. Equalize the supply and demand and peace and plenty abound.

And yet farmers would have us believe that their calling is the most difficult, laborious, and ill-paid in the world. I am sure they are grossly mistaken. It is merely a matter of industry and common sense, without which no business can be successful. What better illustration can be given? For instance, suppose I have one dozen milking cows; a good pasture capable of feeding them; good tillable land for field corn, corn fodder, rye, wheat, potatoes, soy beans, mangel-wurzels, turnips, and carrots.

It must be the simplest thing in the world to raise enough of these standard crops to keep your cows up to the highest average standard of productiveness, and to leave a considerable part of the crops for family consumption and for sale.

Suppose I keep Jerseys exclusively. With my method of feeding it would seem that twelve quarts per day from each animal would be a fair average. One hundred and forty-four quarts a day of Jersey milk. To be conservative call it one hundred and forty; at twelve cents a quart, that would be $16.80 — still, being conservative, call it $15.

Fifteen dollars average receipts *per diem.*

On the other side the main expenses would be grain for your cows. I should think one bag of feed per day would be sufficient. Say $3 per day. One hired man could do the work with your help easily. Call this $60 per month and board: $2 per day. Board would cost practically nothing because you will raise enough to feed your family and hired man from what is left over after the stock are fed.

Taxes, repairs, and insurance would scarcely amount to more than $1 per day. Call it $2 to leave a comfortable margin. I do not wish to neglect the expense column in a single item. Of course I may have omitted something in the nature of expense, but it must certainly be cov-

ered by the allowance for repairs, taxes, and insurance.

So as I figure it there is a daily receipt of $15 and a daily expense of $7, leaving a net profit of $8 from twelve cows.

I have not figured the receipts from an occasional load of hay or potatoes or garden truck, and an occasional calf or pig; nor have I included the profit in hogs, provided I give the skim milk to hogs and sell the cream. It is said that one third of Jersey milk is cream. A conservative estimate is one quarter. Cream is worth eighty cents a quart. Thirty-five quarts of cream at eighty cents is $28. By making this use of my milk I would nearly double my income and yearly market a dozen or more hogs. I am saying nothing of milk-fed chickens and eggs.

Really, when I consider the opportunities a farmer has to make money, and when I reduce these opportunities to cold figures which never lie, I no longer wonder how an average farmer can afford his motor-truck and his expensive touring-car, while I, as a lawyer with a good practice, feel that a Ford runabout is a luxury that I cannot afford.

Friday, May 3, 191–. I have secured one sheep. A doe — I mean, of course, a ewe. The man who sold her to me, a very distinguished literary man

of a neighboring town, made absolutely no attempt to take advantage of my age or inexperience. On the contrary, he laid his cards on the table and I obtained the filly — I — ah — mean doe, that is to say, the ewe — at a remarkably reasonable price considering her peculiar talents and almost superhuman or rather supernatural agility.

She is a Roman-nosed or aquiline-beaked beast, a Chester White or a White Minorca, with a sad expression and golden eyes. Her voice is a rather monotonous contralto with a lovely reedy quality, somewhat sharpened by constant use and asthmatic bronchitis, and as she has not had time to shave since the latter part of last May or the early part of last June she is covered with a growth of fur of about the consistency and color of the doormat at the back door, made out of the discarded rag carpet from the maid's room.

She is a very engaging animal, indeed, and bids fair to become a rival to the pigs in my affections.

She is a buck-jumper and her late owner could not keep her in the pasture. He said that he tried everything. He had hobbled her front feet together; he had fastened a shingle to her forehead; he had fastened a pole by means of a cunningly devised arrangement of surcingle and martingale so that it projected several feet beyond her nose.

But all to no purpose; and as a last hope he had put her in a pasture that was bounded on three sides by the river and on the fourth by the district schoolhouse. He knew she would not try the river and he felt sure that she was safe. But to his amazement she jumped over the schoolhouse and galloped home.

I could scarcely believe this, but he assured me it was a fact, and as he is a man of unimpeachable veracity, and as he offered to take me down and show me the schoolhouse and also the river, I felt that his story must be true.

Then again this particular animal was healthy and free from disease to an extraordinary and amazing degree. Why, according to the owner, during his ownership she had been free from Bots, Farcy, Glanders, Sweeny, Thumps, and Scratches; that she never suffered from Grease Heel, Whistling, or Heaves; that she had been immune from Springhalt, Wind Puffs, Splints, Spavin, either Bone or Bog, Shoe Boils, Wolf Teeth, Thrush, or Trichinosis; that she was a stranger to Roup, Pip, Bumblefoot, Thoroughpin, Coffin-joint Lameness, or Hollow Horn; that she was well-mannered and neither bit, kicked, nor crowded in the stall, and was neither a halter-puller nor a tail-hugger. In short, but for her acrobatic talents, she was a most unusually quiet and reliable animal.

Now, under these circumstances what could I have done, as a reasonable man, but buy this paragon? There seemed nothing left for me to do, and I closed the bargain.

I was not entirely new to sheep, nor were sheep new to me. Years and years ago, when I was a boy of twelve, my father had two female sheep — ewes, I believe. One a rather venerable specimen, a veteran of many seasons; the other in the first flush of early womanhood, or rather ewehood.

These ewes freshened or — ah — eh — came in, or — eh — farrowed (that is the word, I knew I should get it), in the latter part of March. The old lady ewe produced twin lambs, and promptly died of the effort. The young female foaled one ewe lamb that died at birth.

This left us with twin lambs and a juvenile aunt that refused to allow them to nurse. She was ill-mannered, unreasonable, and even violent in her refusal. She struggled, kicked, butted, and blatted vigorously. So my father climbed into the pen and showed me how easy it was to hold the unwilling nurse. It *did* seem easy when he did it. He was a man of thirty-five, weighing over two hundred, and had a grip of iron. I had felt it on my collar occasionally and knew just how like iron it was.

Then, after giving a sort of clinic or demon-

stration, he told me to do it three times a day until further notice.

I do not believe any boy had a more strenuous, embattled month than I had with that vicious, desperate, ravening wolf of a female sheep. And yet such was my sense of duty, inspired by my fear of that iron grip on my collar, that three times a day I tightened my "galluses," spit on my hands, and went forth, or rather "in," to slaughter, "resolved to sell my life as dearly as possible," to quote from a page of my then favorite author, one Beadle.

And three times a day after a titanic struggle I succeeded in holding her until the diminutive, thankless orphans were full fed. I say thankless, because those ridiculous midgets actually butted me and constantly rooted valiantly for Auntie. Why, *I* could understand just what they said.

> "Baa-ah-reak his baa-ah-slats in-baa, Auntie,
> Baa-ah-utt him in the baa-ah-elly,
> Baa-ah-ust his baa-ah-ack, Auntie."

And Auntie did her level best, but I held her, although she weighed about ninety pounds and I a short eighty.

After a month father decided that the constant repairs to my clothing were more than he could stand, and we began to feed the twins from a bottle, and my martyrdom ceased.

And yet, like all martyrdoms, it served a purpose. For when I went back among my friends I found that I could throw with ease boys several years older and half as large again as I. Talk of intensive training! Why, if I had continued tussling with that sheep a few years, Christol, Miller, Bauer, Strangler Lewis, Cyclone Burns, Americus, and even the late Frank Gotch might never have been heard of in mat circles, except as second-raters.

We kept the twin lambs for several months, and taught them many engaging and cute tricks. They were named Horatius and Helena. Horatius earned his name, which was at first Willie, by his ability to hold the bridge without any assistance from Spurius Lartius, although a Rammian proud, or from strong Herminius of Titian blood.

I had taught him to mount our high front steps and from this Alpine-like eminence to defy any caitiff to cross the moat. These expressions are perhaps a bit incongruous, but show that I have read widely if not very deeply.

It was to this acquired accomplishment that he owed his banishment, for on one memorable day he soaked my venerable, universally respected, God-fearing great-uncle, Gilman Smith, one in the diaphragm, and sent him flying down the steps endwise, amid a cloud of green corn and

a market-basket, with which he had generously meant to endow our family.

Great-uncle Gilman was, fortunately, not seriously hurt, and after kind hands had assisted him to his feet, and vigorous but skilful hands had exhumed his head from the adhesive ruins of his venerable and respectable stove-pipe hat, and his bleeding nose had been stanched and his broadcloth coat carefully brushed, he was nearly as good as new save for what seemed to me a most inexplicable, ungenerous, and unreasonable prejudice against Horatius and Helena.

And so the edict went forth and I had to sell my pets. We children all cried when the man came to take them away. Even Mother cried.

Father, who had a keen sense of humor, and a most delightful irreverence for sacred things, including Great-uncle Gilman Smith, nearly died laughing over our graphic description of our venerable great-uncle's meteoric descent. I really think he was as sorry as the rest of us when Horatius and Helena were taken away.

So, as I have said several times, I bought the animal, paid for her in advance, to ensure prompt delivery, and now have her on my premises at the end of a strong steel chain twenty feet in length. I feel quite certain that, despite her grasshopper abilities, she cannot possibly bound skyward twenty feet with sufficient mo-

mentum to pull out the picket pin. So far my judgment has been correct, and she passes her time in tripping up peaceful wayfarers and calling for help when inextricably entangled in the hydrangeas.

Saturday, May 4, 191–. The ploughman arrived this morning just as I had finished my stable work and had tethered my solitary sheep in the lush grasses of the tennis court.

"No other sheep was near,
The lamb was all alone,
And by a slender cord
Was tethered to a stone."

As a matter of fact this lamb was tethered to a picket pin by a steel chain that would have held a wild bull of Bashan or a rampaging rhinoceros. I had made my first experiment with a slender cord, and as a result had spent an hour chasing that infernal sheep over the entire neighborhood, and I find that I am not as agile as when

"*Leste et joyeux je montais six étages*
Dans un grenier qu'on est bien à vingt ans."

I really think that my long and soul-shaking race with my pigs the day they arrived did n't do me any lasting good.

So when the ploughman plodded his weary way into my yard and desired information as to where he should cast off, I gave him the desired informa-

tion, and did not, as I had intended, offer to hold the plough or drive the horses.

At noon I was, as usual, in a hurry and rushed through my dinner, fed my pigs, which are really coming along wonderfully, moved my sheep to another part of a still virgin lawn and hurried to my office without examining the ploughing. I did notice, however, that he had fed his horses with hay and oats on one of the lawns that was not to be ploughed, and that they had pawed up bushels of turf and had scattered hay over the premises, broadcast.

I was tempted to raise my hands to heaven and profanely to demand why, in the name of everything sacred, any man knowing enough to drive a team of horses, which requires skill and common sense, to hold a plough and direct it across the landscape, an act requiring a keen sense of orientation, did n't have sense enough to refrain from pasturing a pair of horses weighing a ton apiece on an adjacent lawn, which he must have known was the apple of my eye and showed plainly that it had been rolled, watered, and mowed to the condition of green velvet?

But I was in a hurry. A real client was awaiting me. I needed his fee to pay the ploughman. Ploughmen were rare and expensive birds. I knew that an altercation with him when the work was half done would result in a protracted

hunt for a new ploughman whom I might be unable to find, and I could not look forward with any degree of pleasure to a month spent in spading up that lawn.

And so I swallowed my dinner, swallowed my indignant resentment, and hastened back to my client. When I returned that night I found the lawns ploughed, the horses and the ploughman gone, and hay, grain, and stubble scattered over my premises.

I also found that in his desire for good measure he had ploughed several furrows over a neighbor's line, there being no boundary fences, and the neighbor — ordinarily a man of equable temper and genial disposition — criticizing the matter out of the corner of his mouth in tones that could readily have been heard for a mile and a half, and before I had my supper I was obliged to incur obligations to re-sod the ploughed strip of his land and to make everything shipshape.

I did not blame him a bit. It did me good to hear him swear and threaten to do awful things to the ploughman. I hope he will do just as he said he would. I have faith to believe he will, if one may place any dependence upon profanity when delivered out of the corner of one's mouth.

At all events, my tennis court and croquet ground have disappeared under parallel lines of freshly turned earth. Where for several sea-

sons the fretful sound of children (neighbors' children, for my own never used the ground), in raucous dispute over the innocent game of croquet, prevailed to such an extent that we had to go out frequently and threaten to fire them off the reservation if peace did not immediately dawn, the man with the hoe, the rake, the spade, the sprinkler, and the pruning-hook is to come into his own, and the wilderness is to blossom like a rose.

Sunday, May 5, 191–. To-day is cool; rather too cool, but with a cloudless sky and no wind. The doctor was called away and could not take me out to buy a cow. One more week of exorbitant milk prices. It has been a great day to work around the barn and I improved the occasion to build an outdoor pen for my pigs. This only required six posts to fence in a large yard between my barn and the back fence. I had borrowed a post-hole digger, and as the frost is all out of the ground I dug the holes in about an hour.

As a post-hole digger is a sort of enormous gimlet or gigantic auger which is driven into the ground by a powerful rotary movement of the operator, which is accomplished by a violent twist of the body, I found myself at the end of the hour with an almost unconquerable tendency to run around myself or to revolve upon my own

axis, something like the feeling a pinwheel must have when in full blaze.

This feeling was so strong that I was forced to give up work for the day and to sit down and watch the landscape revolve. It got monotonous after a while and after an hour or two the impression wore off.

I imagine that to-morrow I shall feel like a wind-twisted sapling. Anyway, the post-holes are dug, which is a relief.

Monday, May 6, 191–. Birds are arriving faster than I can count them. Have seen no golden robins yet. It is a bit early for them. The plum and cherry trees and the red maples are in blossom and alive with bees and there is a hum in the air that speaks of an early season.

My sheep is gradually losing her fear of me. I was afraid that some things I said about sheep the other day while I was in full cry after her might have prejudiced her against me. But evidently she is of a trusting and forgiving nature or stupid. Had any one said the things to me that I said to and about her, it would have been a long time before full forgiveness came, if indeed it ever did.

At all events, I will meet her halfway. That is the best I can do under the circumstances. But I will keep her securely tied for a while at least.

Tuesday, May 7, 191–. All the spare time I could take from the office was devoted to re-sodding my neighbor's strip. It is a longer and harder job than I thought it would be, and made no easier from the fact that his comments as the work proceeds are not as encouraging as they might be. I will never again consent to forego the luxury of a line fence. There should be a law to compel one whether neighbors want one or not.

Wednesday, May 8, 191–. My wife has been taking quite an interest in the sheep. Has named her Betty and has petted her a good bit. Sheep and lambs seem affectionate animals and one becomes fond of them quite readily. My wife did. To-day she somehow appears to have acquired a dislike to Betty in the few hours between the time when I, having wrought blisteringly with a rake, hoe, and shovel on my neighbor's strip, fed hens, pigs, and sheep, and securely fastened the latter on the lawn directly in front of the house, left for my office, and the time when I hurried back, intent on throwing aside my coat and raking smooth a bed for carrots.

It was warm and pleasant when I left. A song sparrow with a black necktie was singing on the top of the grape arbor. Some blackbirds were following the lines of furrows, pecking and chattering industriously. A pair of wee creepers were

climbing the trunk of an apple tree and sounding their tiny trumpets, and really, much as I love the swivel chair by the battered rolltop in the window, and the view of the fine old square with its old white church, its square, white, three-storied houses, its court- and town-house with its white pillars and its blind goddess, its beautiful marble bandstand, the work of French and Bacon, I really hated to leave my farm.

And when I learned of the astonishing antics of the wife of my bosom, a discreet and almost middle-aged woman, a church member, and long its organist, a member of uplift clubs, I regretted more than ever that I had not remained.

As a sort of neighborhood pageant it was said to have been most unique and unusually entertaining. It had been unrolled (I think that is the proper term for the production of pageants. Yes, I am quite sure of it. One *unfurls* banners, but *unrolls* pageants and curtains and sheet music) just as the young and beautiful teachers of the seminary and irreverent young misses with books under their arms, and milk carts and grocery motors, and mail carriers, and men in white trousers and blouses pushing handcarts loaded with pails of paint, were going gayly to their various tasks, that my wife broke the trammels of a life dedicated to respectability and good works, surprised herself, and scandalized her friends, and

on an open and velvet lawn performed evolutions and antics that placed her at once in a very high class as an acrobat.

You will remember that I had securely tethered Betty on the lawn. For a while she fed contentedly, but became lonesome and bleated. At once my wife came out with a pan of apple parings as a special *entrée* for Betty. As she stepped out on the lawn, a friend carrying an umbrella (a passing cloud had sprinkled a bit) came into the yard to speak to her. It was evident that Betty had never seen an umbrella before, for she instantly dashed for the barn like a streak of lightning, and as my wife stood watching her flight in astonishment, the steel chain sweeping the lawn like the minute hand of a grandfather's clock, with the utmost velocity picked up that wondering lady, pan, apple parings, and all, and flipped her into the air like the small boy at the end in a game of snap-the-whip.

When she had been assembled and fastened together by kind and gentle hands and helped back into the house and brushed and comforted, it was found that she was unhurt. And yet when I came home, heard the story, and laughed at her, she became very indignant and really would have nothing to say to me.

And this is the woman who only two short weeks ago laughed herself almost into convul-

sions when I sustained an almost fatal fall on the muddy driveway, while chasing my pigs. Verily how true the saying, "It makes a difference whose ox is gored."

And I had practically spoiled a fairly good suit and had been soaked to the skin and sorely abraded by gravel stones, and she was absolutely unhurt and had lost only the apple parings, which the sheep afterwards ate with great relish, and her dignity (or at least a part of it, and she has plenty left) which nobody particularly cares to claim.

My peas are growing finely. I really cannot tell at this stage just which are the giants and which the dwarfs. If they are not cut down in some untimely fashion as by the escape of the sheep or pigs, a few weeks' growth will tell the story.

The loss of my plan of the garden is very unfortunate. It is a bad thing to be absent-minded. I really hope I have not unwittingly attached it to some deed of realty. That might lead to most unfortunate results.

Thursday, May 9, 191–. I made application for admission to the local Grange some time ago. I met a committee of three to-day to see if they would recommend my admission.

Much to my surprise and rather to my confu-

sion they declined to recommend me. I asked the reason and they said I was not a real farmer, but an imitation. I think the word "cheap" was prefixed to the word "imitation," which seemed to me uncalled for and incorrect. So far I have found that my experience as an amateur farmer has been anything but cheap.

I reminded them that their actual membership included storekeepers, mechanics, poultrymen, beekeepers, milliners, dry-goods men, restaurant keepers, professional men, undertakers, plain and fancy justices of the peace and quorum, barbers, manicures, veterinary surgeons, shoemakers, retired gentlemen, bachelor maids, legal voters of both sexes, police and constables, selectmen, fence-viewers and pound-keepers.

They could not deny that, but showed some resentment over the fact that I had been in the habit of giving my produce to my personal friends, and they departed without giving me any encouragement.

I felt a good deal discouraged over the result, but endeavored to be philosophical. It was not the first time I had been rebuffed in my efforts to join societies.

My charming personality had no effect apparently. I think a certain irreverence that I had shown in my writings toward certain sacred things, such as secret societies, local dignitaries,

and politicians, had for years militated against my success as a public favorite.

It reminded me very amusingly of what occurred to me a good many years ago.

Exeter was then, and for a long time prior thereto had been, a flourishing country town and for an equal time had flourished without the aid, countenance, and supervision of a board of trade.

I had just been admitted to the bar, and my being let loose to prey upon an innocent country community was in a measure coincident with the organization of a board of trade.

My own experience in the active practice of my profession had not been particularly encouraging to me or gratifying to my friends or clients, particularly the latter. The few cases I had managed to secure had been uniformly mismanaged and my clients had been put to serious expense and much mental stress; and the semi-occasional opportunity I had of spreading legal knowledge abroad, in the way of advice to clients, had resulted in dire and unexpected disaster to those fatuous individuals who had relied upon it.

Indeed, it had got to the point that whenever I heard a step on the stairs leading to my office, I felt a sudden hollowness in my vitals in fear that the comer might be some one I had advised before.

And so my reputation as a lawyer, when meas-

ured by the ordinary standard of success, had not been even respectable. It had, indeed, occasioned some remarks of a deprecatory and uniformly profane nature. But an older and successful lawyer said, when he had got me nonsuited in a case, "Cheer up, old man, you cannot always win; some one *must* get licked." As up to that time that "some one" had always been I and my client, I did not derive a vast amount of cheer and encouragement from the remark.

At that time, as I said, the Exeter Board of Trade was organized and incorporated. To one who had been a resident of Exeter for years it would seem incredible that for so many generations the vast enterprises could have flourished that had been so successfully managed and financed without the guiding hand of a board of trade.

That the alewife industry could have existed, with its yearly clubfest, when every able-bodied citizen and dweller took down from the rafters his trusty dip-net, exhumed his rubber boots, and lit out for the mud-flats of Salt River to beat, scoop up, and barrel a few cartloads of spawning fish, each one of which contained a few billion needle-like bones and little else.

That the sawmill industry could have existed, with its single up-and-down saw running intermittently for six weeks each spring; that the

vast coal industry and salt-fish carrying trade with Portsmouth, requiring a fleet of one flat-bottomed boat containing a leg-of-mutton sail, a pair of sweeps, a half-dozen push-poles, a jug of New England rum, and a crew of three men considerably under its cheering influence, could have kept out of bankruptcy.

And yet, in spite of the undoubted financial prosperity of these industries, it was deemed wise to instigate, organize, and perpetrate a board of trade, and I was asked to join, and from a praiseworthy intention to aid in whatever appeared to be for the welfare of my native town I willingly consented to allow my name to be proposed.

I did not attend the first meeting because I was told by the zealous patriot who was soliciting recruits that before I could enter the charmed circle my credentials must be presented in due form, and must pass the Rubicon of a committee especially appointed for the purpose of separating the sheep from the goats.

I was also informed that all the really great lawyers of the town were to become members of the organization, and I naturally felt the flattering distinction of being in good company.

I was very much gratified to find that I was admitted to membership, and very much amazed to find that the eminent lawyers were rejected,

and upon inquiry found that objection had been raised to the admission of lawyers to an exclusively business association, but upon my friends' assurance that I was really no lawyer, but at the best only an imitation, I was voted in amid much applause of a purely ironical nature.

Of course I never qualified as a member after that.

Friday, May 10, 191–. This morning I planted carrots, beets, and potatoes. I am told that frosts may cut down my potatoes. However, I am ready to take a chance. I am sure that song sparrow is going to be a fixture here until fall.

A pair of robins have built on the low branch of a spreading spruce tree in front of the house. I have been watching them for several days. To-day I got a chance to look into the nest. I could do so without bending the branch. There were three eggs. There are few things pleasanter than to see eggs warm in a nest, and to realize the pleasure you are to have in watching the gradual development of the young, from naked, bluish nestlings, raising their heads on wabbly, weak necks, to strong, mottled-breasted birds, following their parents about the garden and eating on an average one earthworm a minute from early dawn until long after sunset.

The old bird has got so used to me that she

makes but very little fuss when I approach the nest.

Saturday, May 11, 191–. I intended taking a half-day off to-day and to put in some telling work in my garden. My peas have grown so and the weeds have developed to such an extent that I must hoe them. I like hoeing much better than post-hole digging. With a sharp hoe, and the ground of the right consistency, neither too wet nor too dry, the amount of work a man can easily do is surprising. I use a long-handled hoe so that my shoulders may not acquire the curve that is not a line of beauty, and I take care not to work too steadily. I find that looking at birds and occasionally couching a warning at a trespassing cat with a jagged stone or a half brick, keeps my work from being too monotonous, as does the exchanging of remarks with the passing populace, all of whom seem very much interested and amused at my industry.

I was prevented, much to my disgust, from spending the afternoon on my farm, and instead had to spend it in court where the idiotic quarrels of several Polish neighbors were fought to a finish with the assistance of two lawyers, one official interpreter, and with the entire crowd of Polish attendants volunteering lingual assistance. It seemed a dreadful waste of time, especially as

I was wholly in the dark at the end of the trial as to the cause of the trouble. So having fined several of the attendants for contempt of court in insisting on usurping my duties, and having found one of the parties (and probably the wrong one) guilty and imposed a stiff sentence, I felt that I had not wholly wasted my time.

Sunday, May 12, 191–. Sunday again. This afternoon my friend the doctor came round with his motor. Doc said that apart from the pleasure of my society he was very curious to be present at a cow trade, especially on the Sabbath. He says that in his unregenerate days he has ofttimes sat up all night playing poker, but he had understood that cow trades were things apart from the usual. That the amount of concentration necessary to be a good poker player is mere piffle when compared to a trade in or the purchase of cows.

Accordingly he and his wife were exceedingly anxious to view at close range the mighty conflict of intellects that only cow trades may demand.

I laughed low in my beard, or would have had not custom rendered a beard a thing to marvel at and loathe, and I climbed into the machine and listened to the marked sarcasm of my host, and answered in kind the numerous suggestions he made as to the best method of approaching a cow owner who might be persuaded to part with her

at an exorbitant price. Every time we would pass a field, pasture or farmyard containing cows, Doc would clap on the emergency brake and I would nearly go through the wind-shield with the abruptness of the stop.

Then, when I would show no interest in the animals to which he called my attention, and which I had seen before he did, he would apostrophize me roundly for my lack of the true sporting spirit.

Indeed, he showed so much more interest than I that he personally entered the premises of several worthy agriculturists and priced their animals. But beyond calling his particular attention to a meadowlark and a brown thrush, or the song of a bridge pewee by the side of a bubbling, gurgling brook, I did n't say a word, except in answer to his questions, about the errand that took us into the country, which course of treatment provoked my young friend to the most captious of criticisms of me as a farmer.

What did I think he was carting me through the wilderness for? If I supposed he had n't something better to do than to travel for hours through the forest primeval while I conversed on nothing more serious or uplifting than the feeble peeping of a wall-eyed and loose-tailed flycatcher (this showed plainly that Doc knew birds much better than he pretended) or a brown

streak in the air (another description of a brown thrush, good enough for the books), then I had better get down to the plain facts of the case, which were that he had come out that sacred afternoon to enable me to skin some merry bull-whacker out of a month's board in a cow trade, and not to spend the precious hours in ranting about birds.

I smiled again enigmatically, told Doc to give me another cigarette and to keep his weather eye peeled for a real thoroughbred warranted to give two cans of milk a day and lay a dozen eggs, sold for no fault, kind, and an easy milker; and if he struck anything of that description to call it to my attention and he would see the trained legal mind go to the mat with the *mens conscia recti* of a New England farmer rich in the traditions of generation upon generation of Yankee shrewdness.

So Doc, having produced the cigarette and a light, threw on the power and we skimmed along for some distance right merrily. It was a beautiful day, and the woods presented every delicate shade of green, from the filmy lace of the birches to the dark green of the pines and spruces. We passed through a wood path. An oven-bird was calling "Teacher! — Teacher! — Teacher!" A jay called overhead and the distant drumming of a cock partridge was heard above the humming of the motor.

We emerged upon the main highway. At the left of the highway was a farmhouse, barn and lane leading to the pasture. Halfway down the lane stood a magnificent animal light red in color with a white face and polished horns. Doc applied the brake suddenly and my wife lit between my shoulders. This stopped her in full flight, but was rather a shock to me. To cut off the trajectory of a plump lady of ten stone and over is sometimes, particularly when unexpected, a bit trying. I remonstrated with the doctor for his abruptness, and he apologized both to me and to my wife, who was trying to straighten her hat and wondering how long it would take to get new glasses put in the frame of her spectacles.

"There!" said the doctor with the utmost satisfaction. "There is the handsomest cow we have seen yet, and the largest. She ought to give a washtubful at a milking. She is either a Clydesdale or a Percheron. This fooling about with a little Jersey that gives a few pints is all nonsense. If a man wants a cow for her milk, the more milk he gets the more money he makes. Now don't say that this one does n't suit you. Is n't she the handsomest animal that we have seen to-day?"

I admitted that the animal in question was all that he said it was.

"Well, then," he continued, "hop right down

and hunt up the owner and start your trade." And he opened the door.

"What is the matter now?" he demanded, as I made no move to get out. "Won't this one do, or are you renigging?"

"Considering that this animal is a three-year-old Hereford steer, and that stock-breeding science has as yet not produced a milch steer, I don't believe I care to buy this particular animal, Doc," I replied.

Doc took a long look, then forcibly expressed the conviction that he would be damned and started the machine with a jerk that fully expressed his feelings.

Now the fact is that I knew before I started out just what I wanted and did not propose to buy anything else. I wanted a small cow, because, if she turned out to be a kicker, she could not kick me nearly as far as a large, heavy, and more muscular cow, and in the aggregate I could save considerable time in travelling a proportionally shorter distance back to finish milking, and of course that is a very important consideration.

Then again I could more easily induce a small cow to step off my foot, and that member would be less flattened and distorted than it would be with the superincumbent weight of an animal weighing the greater part of a ton. And the same relative results would obtain should the animal

insist upon using my prostrate form as a boulevard for convenient entrance to or exit from her stall. And so I was determined to have a small cow for purely personal reasons.

And we had gone but a short mile from the Hereford steer before I saw the cow I wanted. In front of a farmhouse a number of cows grazed by the roadside. There were a couple of Holsteins, an unusually large and fine Ayrshire, three old Jerseys, and a red cow with the delicate muzzle and head of a Jersey and the body color of a Guernsey. She was very small, but very compact. Indeed, by the side of the Ayrshire and the big Holsteins she did not look much larger than a goat. I am by no means sure that old Billy, a goat owned so many years by the proprietor of the Swampscott House in my boyhood, and which rejoiced in the name of "Old Asafœtida," was not larger than this cow.

In obedience to my request Doc stopped the machine and I got down and went to the farmhouse. A sturdy man of about my age came out whom I recognized as a deputy sheriff. That in itself was against him, but in all other ways I knew him to be an exceedingly square man. As he came out I saw a sign, "Cow for sale," on a corner of the house.

"Hello, Mr. F.", I said; "which cow do you want to sell?"

"The black-faced red cow," he answered.

"What is wrong with her?" I asked.

"Her size," he answered. "I want bigger cows and more milk."

"Is she an easy milker and kind?"

"Both," he answered.

"How old is she?"

"Five years. Just had her second calf."

"What is her breeding?"

"Jersey and Guernsey, a good combination," he replied.

"What do you want for her?"

He told me — a fair price.

"You've sold her," I answered.

"When do you want her?" he asked.

"Within two or three days."

I went back to the machine. Doc was looking at me as if I were a strange and most amazing animal.

"Well, for the love of Mike!" he gasped. "Is that the way you buy cows? How do you know you are not stuck?" he inquired.

"Don't know yet. But I like the looks of the cow and I know the man, and he says she is all right."

For the second time that afternoon Doc expressed the fervent and settled conviction that he would be damned, and on the way home he remarked with much feeling that he would be cussed.

I think the doctor's wife and mine were fully as much surprised at my promptness as he was, but they were not so outspoken and frank in their opinions.

And so I have bought my cow and shall have to get her home, either by truck or lead rein.

Monday, May 13, 191–. Rain! rain!! rain!!! rain!!!! the entire day. Not a plain drizzle, not a series of intermittent showers, not a gentle and steady downpour, but a pouring, sluicing, furious downpour. The kind of rain that beats through an umbrella as easily as it would go through a ladder. A rain that chokes up the manholes of the sewer with a surging mass of last year's leaves, sticks, old newspapers, and all sorts of rubbish, and then overflows into puddles a foot or more deep and in places where one must — absolutely must — pass in order to get anywhere.

There were at least a dozen places in my enforced trip to the office where I went nearly to my knees. After I was well ducked I did n't mind it so much. When a person cannot get any wetter even if he fell into the river, there is a sort of satisfaction in one's misery.

I saw five people fall prostrate in puddles today and gloried in it. There is a supreme sort of happiness to see people fall prostrate in the

very puddles that you have successfully navigated. They look so foolish when they scramble up and slosh round for their hats and grips floating down the rushing stream, and they try hard to make a joke of it. You feel sure they will not catch cold because you know they are so furious within, so boiling with rage that their temperature is dangerously above normal. And you also feel that the thorough soaking will prevent apoplexy.

So you put your feet on the gas heater that you have illuminated for this particular occasion, and hug yourself with delight when another bewildered wayfarer plunges in to cross the ford. And when you have dried out sufficiently to make it prudent to work, you sit in the window and alternately try to clear away the pile of work that has accumulated and kill yourself laughing as another soaked and furious pilgrim or vagrant loses his footing and disappears to the neck.

I have thought of little but my cow since her purchase yesterday, and had arranged a very complete programme by which she was to be transferred with marked deftness into her new quarters. But the rain has merely postponed it. She will keep, I trust, unless she gets drowned in her pasture. Well, the farmers have been praying for rain for weeks and it looks as if they were having enough. I imagine by to-morrow or next

day they will be shaking their heads despondently and deploring the unheard-of wetness of the season.

I ordered a ton of hay by telephone this morning. Certainly it will not be hauled to-day, at least by telephone. I am afraid my arrangement of words would cause a professor of English to suffer severe pains.

Tuesday, May 14, 191–. When I woke up this morning it was still raining, and I have a vague recollection of hearing it beating on the piazza roof during the night. When I went out to the barn this morning I found my pig yard a pool of water ten feet across. The pigs were safe and dry in the barn and evidently had not dared to try the vasty deep. I have no doubt that pigs can swim. Indeed, I have heard that swimming pigs will cut their own throats with the upward thrust of their sharp forefeet. Whether this is so or not, I decided not to take a chance and I worked in the rain for a half-hour in cutting a trench which let the water into my garden.

The sheep fretted a good deal at being kept in the barn, but as she has a fleece about six inches in depth it would be midsummer before she dried out completely.

Oddly enough, in spite of the rain which fell steadily but much more gently than yesterday,

there were dozens of small, greenish-yellow warblers, much draggled by the wet, but apparently minding it not at all as they actively foraged for worms and insects, and caught them, too, as I saw by carefully watching them. They were very tame, too, and would come within reach of me. There seemed to be several varieties, some of which were strangers to me. And once I was almost sure I saw a summer yellowbird, but I am quite sure I was mistaken. I saw so many of these warblers that I decided that they were members of a large flight going North.

My hens are laying well now. Got nine eggs to-day in spite of the rain. I let them out to-day. Hens seldom scratch in wet weather, but go about with their tails furled tightly and depressed to shed the rain, and pick up hundreds of earthworms and grubs. I wonder how my cow is getting along? I had hoped before this to be raising my own milk and cream, and possibly churning my own butter. I wrote Mr. F., the deputy sheriff, to-day that I would come down the first pleasant day. I wonder if there will ever be another?

Wednesday, May 15, 191–. Still rainy in streaks. Everything steams. It is impossible to light a match on any ordinary surface. I am glad I did not plant all my potatoes. I feel sure they would

have rotted. To-day I engaged a motor-truck and a man to go with me for my cow, which I am sure must have aged considerably since I bought her. It seems as if it had been raining for weeks. The river is a freshet and every brook is over its banks as in March. The blackbirds are assembling in small flocks again. This sometimes happens in very wet weather and before they have nested. The flocks never become very large, however.

The trout fishermen are much disgusted, as the high water has spoiled their fishing. It was about gone, anyway, with the warm weather and the spring flies and bugs. I hope to bring my cow home to-morrow. The milkman brought in his bill to-day. I must either get that cow or sell my pigs, and mighty soon.

Thursday, May 16, 191–. Pleasant to-day; the first time in weeks, it seems to me. Of course it may not have been so long, but when measured by my desire to do some work on my farm, and my overpowering desire to transport to my premises by cart, lead rein, or motor-truck, one Jersey-Guernsey cow, weight several pounds, possibly several hundred, safe, sound, and in good milking condition, it seems months.

Of course, as to-day was the first pleasant day for weeks, every person in Exeter and vicinity, having the opportunity to plunge into litigation

of the fifty-cent variety, had to come to my office for the advice as to the proper method to proceed. Now, I practice law for a livelihood and make a comfortable if rather close-reefed livelihood out of the practice. But I detest the small details of penny-foolish litigation. Why it is that an ordinarily sensible man, who can be trusted to do most things well, who is reliable and law-abiding and prudent and well-meaning, will try and involve himself in a maze of pettifogging litigation is more than I can understand.

Now, if the business offered had amounted to anything, I would have further postponed farm and live-stock operations, but I made short work of these litigants, and those whom I could n't dissuade from litigation I passed over to younger and more energetic lawyers. I was engaged in more productive operations.

At two o'clock my friend the truckman and myself started for the farmhouse of the deputy sheriff. The sun shone, the birds sang, the buds were swelling, the grass springing, all nature rejoicing, and seven miles away a valuable cross-bred cow was awaiting extradition with most exemplary patience.

I think the pleasure of any excursion, whether by rail, motor, horseback, or pedestrianism, depends in a very great measure on the object of the trip, or the fact that one has an object. When

younger I used to ride horseback a great deal, and I always enjoyed more the trip that was made with some definite object. It might be a business trip; to try a case before some justice of the peace, or to look up a witness, to draw a deed or execute a will for some client who was unable to come to the office; or it might be a trip to discover an oven-bird's nest, or the golden color of a sheet of water coming over a dam in the sunlight, or to discover the reason why the jays were making such a row in a certain place in the woods, or to start an old blue heron out of a small frog-infested pool under the big beech trees on the Kensington road.

And so to-day when the truckman, I, and the truck started out, I had an object, and I did not feel that I was in any way wasting precious time. I had telephoned the owner of the cow to have her ready and promised for my part to have my check ready and certified. Under these circumstances the man should have had the cow ready and have been ready to give us such aid and countenance as he could. But as a deputy sheriff his down-sittings and up-risings were not his own, but the public's, and he left word that he had been called away, and that, upon the profert of a certified check for the agreed sum, I would have the right, title, and interest in the cow aforesaid and aforementioned in fee simple, and that we

could enter his close, and, wherever she might be situated, remove her at our pleasure.

We learned that the cow was in the pasture, and after handing over the check, which was examined word for word and letter for letter, we were given letters of marque and reprisal, which consisted of a rope halter and a couple of stout clubs, and told the way to the pasture.

Armed with the muniments of title we proceeded blithely to the pasture and climbed the fence, and here the truckman had his first taste of adventure. As he threw his weight on the fence the top rail broke and he secured his first fall. As I was carefully negotiating the same barrier at the time, I did not see his performance and could not say whether the fall was the result of a hammerlock, half-nelson, toe-hold, collar-and-elbow, or half-scissors. From the natural position the ordinary man takes in surmounting a pasture fence I should be inclined to say it was a scissors or possibly a half-scissors and hammerlock combined.

Judging from the fuss the truckman was making about it, I am sure that he did not give a hang as to what kind of a hold it was. Indeed, his monologue was so long and so fervent and the truckman appeared to be so depressed over the matter that I felt called upon to soothe him with apt quotation:

"But, mother, as I climbed the fence, the nearest way to
town,
My apron caught upon a stake and in the dust sat down,
And covering with his steel-gloved hands his darkly
mournful brow,
'No more, there is no more,' he said, 'to lift the sword for
now.'"

I am afraid that I got this quotation somewhat mixed, but just how, I cannot say. At all events, my humanitarian effort to lighten his gloom was a failure, for he merely snarled, "Aw! go to hell with your poetry and lemme alone!" And began to rub his shin anew and to make up faces expressive of severe pain.

I then decided I might try one more quotation of a more classic vein which might divert his sad thoughts, and gave him one from Scott's "Marmion":

"Edmunds is down, my life is reft,
The Admiral alone is left."

"Say! you, wotcher tryin' to put across?" he growled. "'F yer wanter ketch yer damned old cow, yer gotter cut out any more of that stuff. See?"

I then decided that he had no sense of humor whatsoever, and told him to come on and we would get to work and finish up the job once for all, and he slowly and limpingly followed me, rumbling maledictions in his throat.

We found the herd of cows but a short distance

away, grazing quietly and showing no fear of us. They were evidently used to kind treatment, and I had no difficulty in walking up to my small cow and taking her by the horns with the owner's and proprietor's grip. Perhaps she resented this as an undesirable, dangerous, and improper familiarity, for she swung her head so violently that in spite of her comparatively small size, she slat me a considerable distance, where I landed in somewhat the position of a small boy after trying an unscientific cartwheel.

This time the truckman showed more humorous appreciation of the affair than his previous conduct had warranted. Indeed, he laughed so long and so hard that I in turn got a bit warm and thought he overdid it. However, I reflected that honors were even and swallowed my feelings. In fact I essayed a smile, but I fancy it was a trifle wry.

The next time I approached my property I carefully placed a rope around her neck, and to my surprise she made no attempt to escape, but allowed me to fasten the rope in a loose hitch and followed me as if she approved the change of owners, and was really rather proud of it.

We had no trouble until we arrived at the barnyard where we had left the truck. We were walking briskly and making a good three miles an hour when she saw the motor. I was ahead, step-

ping proudly under the impetus of possession and of happy realization of ownership, when she stopped abruptly, snorted, and began to revolve with great rapidity. The sudden twitch of the rope had the effect of snapping me violently into the air and swinging me in a huge circle of which the radius was composed of six feet of me, two feet of my arms and clutching fingers, six feet of stout rope, and two feet of the head and neck of the cow. In all about twenty feet of radius.

If I am correct in my recollections, the circumference of a circle is 3.1416+ times the diameter. Taking the diameter of the circle, of which my heels were marking the circumference, as forty feet and leaving out the + sign, it is sufficient, for the purposes of illustration, to prove mathematically that in one complete revolution I covered a distance of 62.832 feet. It was really more than that, because under immense centrifugal force I am certain that my arms were pulled several inches from their sockets.

I am very glad that the barnyard was so large. Had the space been more contracted, I am sure that my flying heels might have done as much damage as a falling derrick. As it was, I made an unobstructed circuit several times before I let go. I did not want to let go and did my best to hold on. But there is a limit to one's grip, and at about the fourth circuit I reached my limit and

I landed in somewhat the position of a small boy after trying an unscientific cartwheel

let go. I did not stop after I let go, but continued at a tangent for a long distance. Indeed, it was the harrowing uncertainty about the distance I would go and the direction I would take, that made me try so hard to hold on.

As I have said, it was a very large barnyard and was surrounded by a very high and strong fence, and when I came to a stop I was, thanks to that fence, still in the yard, and only partly through the fence. The cow had stopped revolving, and the truckman, the wife and daughter of the deputy sheriff, and several summer boarders from the city, who had come out on the piazza to view the proceedings, were very much interested, and so amused that they collapsed into their chairs and hammocks.

I was dizzy from my rapid circuit of the bases and felt much as a horse-chestnut must feel when swung by a small boy in rapid circles at the end of a string, and just before it is thrown over a telegraph wire.

Little by little I recovered my poise, and affecting not to notice the summer boarders and the family of the deputy sheriff, I told the truckman to catch the cow, which he accomplished without difficulty. Then we placed a rope around her horns, passed it forward and around an upright post in the forward part of the truck and began to pull her into the truck. She held back

and tried to pull away, but we snubbed the rope around the post and felt sure that unless her head pulled off we had her. Still, I wanted the whole of her, which clearly belonged to me, and so as a last resort I told the truckman to twist her tail.

This is not a dangerous thing to do to a cow, as she cannot kick high, and with but one foot at a time. To do this to a horse or mule would be plain suicide.

As he twisted I put one foot against the truck and pulled with all my might. For a moment she did not budge, although he applied the grape-vine twist, but when he shifted to the pretzel twist she could not stand the pain, and sprang into the truck so quickly that I fell flat on my back with the utmost violence, nearly shaking my teeth loose, and causing the unmannerly city boarders to roar with laughter.

Now, here was the point at which I rather think I put it over the entire crowd, including the truckman, for, lying flat on the ground and keeping my foot still braced against the truck, I held the rope taut and with well-simulated coolness shouted to the truckman to fasten the other rope to the side of the truck, and while he was doing it I lay quietly holding the rope as if it had been my deliberate intention to land prostrate in the exact method practised. Then, when

the truckman had secured the cow, I slowly arose and, still ignoring the city boarders as if they did not exist, I made a half-turn of the rope around one of the uprights of the truck, and resumed my coat, and we climbed to the seat, threw on the power, and backed out of the yard. As we departed I raised my hat as politely as possible to the family of the deputy sheriff.

As we drove out of the yard I distinctly heard one of the city boarders remark to another in a tone of respectful surprise: "Well, say, the old guy knew what he was doing after all."

To whom the other replied:

"Yes, he ain't such a fool as he looks."

"Gosh," was the reply, "it would be tough if he was."

So, on the whole, I felt that I had made an impression of respectability and common sense, even if I had not impressed them by my personal beauty.

Even the truckman had conceived a sort of respect for me that had not shown before, and as we jogged along we lit our pipes and chatted like old friends about various matters of common interest. The motor rattled and bubbled, the cow swayed from side to side as we rattled around corners. We met acquaintances who bowed and smiled and waved their hands. We met motors and the cow shrunk away as far as

her tethers would permit. But she was too securely tied to get away.

Was she? Wait a bit. Just as we were bowling along beside a green field beyond which was a deep wood on the farther bank of a rushing brook, there was a terrific agitation behind us. We turned in time to dodge the front hoofs of the animal, which was rearing and plunging like a bucking broncho and slatting her horns furiously from side to side. The truckman threw on the brake and we stopped the machine just as the headstall parted and she leaped like a deer over the side of the truck, still tied to the post by a neck hitch. Luckily the rope broke or she would have broken her neck; away she went, over the fence and across the brook like a thoroughbred steeple-chaser.

Seizing our ropes we took up the trail at full speed. It was neither a southerly wind nor a cloudy sky, but none the less it was a hunting afternoon. "Yoicks!" "Tallyho!" "Gone away!" "Ra-ta-ti — Ra-ta-ti — Ra-ta!" I could almost hear the hunting horn as we took the field.

The truckman took the lead, running easily and with high knee action. I followed at a steady pace making for the covert. The truckman, rejoicing in his youth, unwisely tried to clear the brook in his stride. The cow had done so easily. Why not he? The take-off was of stiff clay mixed

with marl and topped with turf, an excellent take-off for timber-topping. Holding himself well in hand, he lifted himself like a bird. Just how he did it, I never could understand, but about halfway across he seemed to stop in mid-air, poise a moment, as I have many times seen a kingfisher do, and then disappear from sight with a tremendous splash, to reappear clutching frantically for his floating hat, and with hideous imprecations, aimed impartially at the cow, her owner, the brook, the infernal foolishness of the whole thing, the world in general, to slosh to the bank and drag himself drippingly to the farther side.

Warned by his mishap I cast about for a bridge and finally found a plank which I crossed without danger and sped after the quarry. When I got to the wood she had disappeared and I could not hear a sound. While I listened the truckman came up and really seemed to have lost all ambition and interest in the hunt. In vain I represented to him the folly of quitting. He flatly declined to go a step farther, and it was only when I put the matter on a sound financial basis that he consented to stay by me to the bitter end. So together we plunged into the thicket and grievously tore ourselves on the thorns and briars:

> "I scratched my hands and tore my hair,
> But still did not complain,
> And had my blackberries been safe
> Should not have cared a grain."

But I did not say this to him. He had shown a crude lack of sympathy with literature, and I merely breathed it to myself as I painfully untwined from my waist a clinging vine containing no less than a dozen needle-like briars, all of which were deeply embedded in my cuticle.

As we heard nothing of the cow we pressed on, stopping occasionally to extract briars and to breathe and curse. After a while we worked our way through the thicket and found the spoor of the cow. From the deep indentations we decided that she had been going due west at a rapid pace, with all sails set and every stitch drawing. After going a short distance we lost the trail in the thick grass. We cast a few eagle glances in several directions, but could not see her.

> "Long looked the anxious squires, their eyes
> Could in the sunlight nought descry."

Then we held a hasty colloquy and should have hastily swallowed a few mouthfuls of pemmican, but not having any I lit a cigarette and the truckman took a plug of "niggerhead" from his pocket and wrenched off a goodly mouthful. Thus refreshed we separated and began to walk slowly toward the next spinney casting about in circles for fresh tracks, whimpering in our eagerness.

A joyful challenge from the truckman and a wave of his hand showed that he had picked up

the scent, and we let ourselves out under wraps and made play toward a copse in the direction of which her trail led. Arrived there we listened long, but could hear nothing, perhaps on account of our rapid and rather wheezy breathing and the pounding of our hearts. Then we cautiously entered the whin and advanced slowly, peering keenly through the leaves. Suddenly there was a snort and a tremendous crash in the bushes. Now, although I knew at once that it was my vagrant cow, yet it came so suddenly that it scared me nearly to death, and I thought my heart would never return to its normal position. From the abhorrent language of the truckman I feel sure that he was similarly affected.

However, we recovered ourselves and dashed in pursuit, and got through the wood in time to see her several hundred yards in the lead, running like an antelope, with her tail standing out as stiffly as a rear bowsprit, if there be any such a contradiction. We passed on as fast as we could, but as my second wind had not come, and I was very much in need of it, we fell behind disgracefully, and in a short time our quarry had passed out of sight in the dim and unfathomed distance.

The truckman here wanted to quit and call on the state militia or the police, but I insisted on proceeding. I had read that a man could walk down a horse if he only kept at it long enough,

and I sagely concluded that if one man could walk down a horse, which is by nature a speedful animal of great courage and endurance, why, then, two men must be able to run down a cow, an animal created for more slothful pursuits. So I insisted that our contract bound him to follow me whithersoever I went. I longed to trill in a rich bass voice:

"Come, follow, follow, follow, follow, follow, follow,
Follow, follow, follow, follow, follow, follow me.
Whither shall I follow, follow, follow, follow, follow, follow,
Follow, follow, follow, follow, follow, follow thee?"

But I did not dare make light of our mission, and then I had no rich bass voice to troll with — my voice being a somewhat shopworn mezzo — and in my exhausted condition I should not have been able to use it, if I had. So we plugged along doggedly for what seemed an interminable distance and finally came out upon a road, a public highway, on the opposite side of which was a farmhouse, in the yard of which we saw —

"'O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!'
I chortled in my joy" —

my cow quietly grazing with a herd of cows belonging to the ranch, and when I looked about me and joyfully recognized the locality, I found myself within a short mile and a half of my own farm. I don't know when I have been so delighted. I had feared that when we succeeded in rounding

her up, we should find ourselves at the Vermont border line, and had for the last hour been expecting to see the Connecticut River; I knew she could n't jump that and probably would not try to swim it. When we first took the field with a merry "Hark, forward!" the Connecticut was a short sixty-eight miles distant as the crow flies, and I felt sure we had travelled fully that distance and that is what had buoyed me up. And so, when I found myself so near home, I felt as old man Noah must have felt when he set foot on Mount Ararat.

It was the work of a moment to catch her and anchor her firmly with a rope halter. Indeed, she seemed genuinely glad to see me and willing to be forgiven, and on my part I was willing to forgive if not forget. The truckman was a bit inclined to lambaste her, but as she was my cow and as he was well paid for chasing her, I did not allow him to indulge his evil passion, and having settled his bill I took my cow and started for home in the gloaming, leaving him to retrieve his truck, miles away.

The final mile was, despite my pleasure in accumulating my vagrant property, perhaps the longest mile I ever travelled. It had been rather over forty years since I had taken part in my last hare and hounds in school, and I did not realize until too late what a lot of youthful vigor and

boyish ambition had been worn away in those forty years.

And so after I had introduced my cow to her new surroundings, and she had been suitably admired and well fed, I went to bed without supper, and with no other preparation for slumber than a hot bath and rubdown. Before leaving her I made arrangements for the gardener of the estate joining mine to milk her. I did not feel able. I felt that there was danger of falling asleep at my post and being drowned in the pail.

Friday, May 17, 191–. I thought I should never get out of bed this morning. I had not dropped a stitch in my back and had not contracted sciatica, but I was so lame and stiff that I thought my joints were rusted stiff and that my muscles would crack every time I moved. I am certain that they creaked. I do not remember ever having been so lame, even on the mornings after the first football games in the season, which in the late sixties and early seventies we played without any preliminary training.

But I got up and I am proud of it. I really thought that if I did n't get up then I never should be able to, and so, after much groaning and calling upon the saints and others, I managed to dress and to hobble downstairs. By the time I had built the kitchen fire I was limbering

up a trifle, and as soon as I could I went to the barn to see my cow. She was very well, thank you kindly, and pricked up her fringed ears and let out a soft moo of recognition. I got a hoe and started to clean her stall, when quick as a flash she kicked me on the wrist and knocked the hoe out of my hand. The blow did n't hurt me a bit, but it roused my temper, which is of the hair-trigger variety, and for a moment it looked as if she was in for a beating. But I suddenly remembered that the owner had told me that the only thing she resented was having a hoe behind her. So I curbed my temper, which was more easily done than usual owing to the fact that any unusual motions caused me acute twinges, and entering the stall, untied her, backed her out, and tied her in the main barn. Then I cleaned out her stall, threw in fresh bedding, mixed a mash in a pail, and led her back.

Then, while she was absorbed in rapid and rasping tongue work in her pail, I sat down with my bright new pail which I bought several days ago in anticipation of her advent, and began to milk her. I am no amateur in the gentle art. Years agone, single-handed and alone, I fought and conquered a venerable Jersey and learned to milk two-handed, and for two years I sat morning and night daily with perfect ease in a humped-up and cramped position and mentally com-

posed waltzes and polkas and quicksteps to the rhythmic singing of the twin streams of snowy white in the shining pail, only breaking into czardas of profanity when an unusually severe sting of a horsefly caused her to slam me against the side of the stall by a quick shift of her hind quarters, or to swipe me across my distorted bucolic countenance with the matted tassel of her tail, weighing in the vicinity of fifteen pounds.

And many a time and oft have I indulged in much speculation as to which was the more dangerous, to be slammed against a hard-shelled partition wall by a justly indignant cow, or to be stung on the back of the neck by a virile and utterly selfish horsefly when one's hands are fully occupied? A mean trick even for a horsefly. In the former there is danger of fractured ribs and broken resolutions. In the latter of typhoid.

I was delighted to find that I had not forgotten the art, and while my wrists were not as strong, and the smooth rhythmic cadence not as perfect, yet I felt that in a short time I should be as good as ever.

It is said that a man never forgets how to swim, to ride a bicycle, or to set type, once he has learned. I am sure that the same is true of milking and, despite my aching muscles and tortured ligaments, I was very much delighted with the fact. I was a very proud and rheumatic old agri-

culturist as I carried in a good measure of milk topped with a good bead of foam, which is the mark of the skilled milker. And what a pleasure it is to strain it into pans, and to carry it down cellar to the wired shelf where it is to stand until ready to skim.

I did not tether her out to-day, nor did I the sheep. I knew it was physically impossible for me to catch either of them should either break away. No, I must recover in part from my stiffness.

The cream from last night's milk was wonderful, and the way those pigs disposed of the skim milk shows plainly that the addition to the live-stock is most welcome. Indeed, Betty will scarcely let me out of her sight. Milked again to-night.

Could not do any work in the garden. Hope to be able to do something to-morrow.

Saturday, May 18, 191–. Felt a little better this morning. Not much, however. It was like jumping into ice water, or having a tooth out, to get out of bed. The doctor says I am lucky to be able to get out of bed in a month after what I did day before yesterday. He said that any man who made such a cussed fool of himself as I did, does not deserve to come out of it half as well as I have. He asked me if I realized how old I am,

and I told him I had n't until yesterday morning, and then I could have sworn that I was over ninety.

I milked this morning. My wrists are a bit lame, but not to bother me. Perhaps if the rest of me was less lame I might notice my wrists. I can almost see my pigs grow. Dick was good enough to mow the lawn to-day for me. By using a hood he got about four bushels of good grass for the cow. I did not work in garden.

Sunday, May 19, 191–. A dull, leaden, depressing cloud has been hanging low over my little agricultural community. Something is wrong with my cow. I am afraid I have been unscientific in my method of feeding. Just where I have failed I cannot say. In some way her rations have been unbalanced. It may be that I gave her a bit too much tankage or a bit too little gluten. I may have been too generous with oil cake and too niggardly with stock feed. Perhaps when I have tethered her out she may not have followed the injunctions of the poet —

"Do not eat the hemlock rank
Growing by the weedy bank,
But the yellow cowslips eat,
They will make it [meaning the milk] nice and sweet."

At all events, she is ailing and distempered.

When I went to her cell — I mean, of course,

her stall — this morning, I saw at once that she was far from well. She did not lower her head and shake her horns at me from sheer high spirits. She did not playfully essay to crowd me against the side of her stall and thereby cave in my thoracic cavity. She did not swing her head sharply round, ostensibly to drive away a fly, but really to knock me a rod or more.

She refused to eat; she refused to drink; she appeared frightfully distended. Indeed, to such an extent that her once prominent hip bones had entirely disappeared. She was shaped much like a sausage balloon. I was so much perturbed over her condition that I absent-mindedly sat down and milked her into the pig pail.

I was seriously worried. The health and productive condition of this animal meant much, nay, all to my agricultural *ménage*. Without milk it meant either starvation for my pigs or vastly increased expense for me, and milk at fourteen cents a quart!

I took another comprehensive look at her from armored head to prehensile tail. Her eyes were dull and glassy. Her head hung low. Her tail, that erstwhile was prone to twist and coil about my windpipe, and to deal me heavy and highly flavored blows upon my eyes, nose, and mouth, hung limp and lifeless.

I tried to see if her tongue was coated, but was

unable to open her mouth without the aid of a Stillson wrench or a crowbar, and I did not like to employ such drastic measures on so short an acquaintance. But I feel confident that her tongue was both coated and furred; indeed her language was incoherent and practically unintelligible. It was clearly a case for a veterinarian. Years before I had employed a veterinarian to perform some necessary operation to the jaw of a broncho, a determined, hot-tempered, wrong-headed, opinionated beast that had taken me through our congested business district at a most terrific rate of speed in spite of my most desperate resistance exerted through the leverage of a Mexican curb, and was only stopped by a ten-foot fence, which did not stop me for a moment as I went lightly over and some distance beyond. I did not fall at all lightly, however.

As a result I was left with a case of locomotor ataxia, happily temporary, and the broncho with a somewhat distorted lower maxillary, "Actinomicosis," I think the veterinarian called it. Indeed, throughout his treatment his language was of so highly technical a nature that I never fully understood the nature of the diagnosis or of the remedial treatment.

That the disease was something very serious and the remedy heroic to the *n*th degree, I was convinced from his bill for services, which, added

to the modest price paid for the animal, made a grand total that would have gone far in the purchase of the Godolphin Arabian.

Now I was mindful of a farmer acquaintance said to have wondrous skill in the rehabilitation of disordered farm animals. Not a seventh son of a seventh son, perhaps, but according to local report a son-of-a-gun with neat stock of every variety. And in employing him I reckoned pretty confidently upon finding out what the trouble was, and in language that even I could understand.

So I called him up and told him to

"Speed, Malise, Speed,"

and added to

"Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges:
Come in your fighting gear,
Broadswords and targes."

"Oh, yes, Scott, eh?" he said in reply. "You want me to come damn quick. All right, I'll be there before you can turn round twice."

I was delighted. Here was a man of few words. A man of parts and of plain language, and homely. The very man I wanted.

He evidently took me at my word, and in a short time a mud-encrusted flivver tore into my yard on two wheels; drew up with a jerk, and

disgorged a stout, rosy man of fifty and a gaunt youth of twenty, together with a black bag filled with what appeared to be a complete plumber's or bank burglar's outfit.

The doctor began to cross-examine me sharply by asking me pointedly if I had fed her on anything containing *Puccinia Straminis*, *Puccinia Coronata*, or *Puccinia Arundinacea*. I told him I was quite sure that I had not ordered or obtained anything that sounded like that, or them.

I denied hotly having given her *Polytrincium Tripolii* or anything remotely approaching it, whatever it might be, but he regarded me with considerable suspicion, and I felt that he entertained strong doubts of my veracity.

He said something about Pharyngeal Polypi and applied his ear to her chest. After a moment of listening he said there seemed to be no symptoms of Hememoptysis or Emphyema. I felt very much relieved at this and told him as much. I should have given up hope had she contracted either Emphyoptysis or Hemempsyema and I told him that, too, but he made no reply except a monosyllabic grunt that might have meant anything, but which I somehow interpreted as expressing a light opinion of my intelligence.

After a moment he shifted to the after deck of the animal and laid his ear against her distended flanks. He got something tangible there,

which he diagnosed as "Non-rhythmic diaphragmatic pulsations," which he said indicated indubitably an inflamed and congested condition of the Rumen, otherwise known as "Impaction of the Maniplis."

Now this was the language of the trained veterinarian and not mine, and I leave you to infer how serious it made her illness seem to me. Although naturally of an optimistic and buoyant disposition, I became plumb discouraged and nearly lost hope. One should never lose hope in a sick chamber or in the presence of one suffering. But "Non-rhythmic diaphragmatic pulsations" seemed about the last step in the dead march to the fertilizer factory.

The veterinarian also said that he had had grave fears of "Thrombosis," which was generally fatal, but that he was confident that she had escaped that. I was relieved to find that she did not have "Thrombosis," for I knew it was generally fatal or ought to be. I had played a B flat *Trombone* quite a little in my younger and unregenerate days until I found that its effect was frequently fatal. At least several irate and able-bodied members of the community had informed me that unless I desisted it would be almost instantly fatal.

The doctor then removed his coat and stripped up his sleeves revealing herculean muscles, and

his gaunt and youthful assistant did the like without, however, accomplishing like results. Then he asked if I happened to have a quart bottle about the premises. I replied that notwithstanding a congenital and deeply rooted antipathy to the saloon, and notwithstanding an official life of many years devoted to a constant and hand-to-hand struggle with the Demon Rum and the various members of his family, yet occasionally a quart bottle wandered into our home life out of the cold and rain, and made its home with us.

I was then requested by the doctor to produce at once or sooner an empty quart bottle and a pail. If the bottle were only partly empty it would do as well, for he would see that it was emptied without undue waste of time. I brought the bottle and the pail, both empty, at which the doctor looked a bit disappointed, but proceeded to compound a sort of witchbroth of tar, soft soap, hot water, varnish, asafœtida, garlic, limburger cheese, and sulphuretted hydrogen. Of course I would not vouch for the correctness of this analysis, but the concentrated villainy of the completed compound certainly would warrant so modest a statement.

Then he filled the bottle with the compound and directed me to hold the animal's head in position while he administered the dose. I en-

tered the stall, threw my right arm around her neck just below her horns, my left under her muzzle, and raised her head without difficulty. But the moment she inhaled a strong whiff of that nauseous compound she awoke to the situation, let out an agonized bellow of protest, and strove mightily to disengage my clinging tendrils.

In so doing she chose a method highly disconcerting to me, for she alternately and with the greatest velocity elevated her head skyward to the full length of her neck and then depressed it until her muzzle touched the floor. This had the effect of flapping me in the air as a housemaid flaps a dustcloth, and with much the same result, as dust from my barn clothes flew in clouds and my heels cracked together like a giant whiplash. Indeed, had it not been for my heavy barn brogans I should have been frayed and unravelled to my knees like an antimacassar or like an old, a very old, pair of trousers.

I let go long before I broke loose owing to the fact that one of her horns had slipped under my sweater, which proved to be of astonishingly strong material, and when I brushed the hayseed, dust, and cobwebs out of my eyes I was in a contorted heap in the manger, and the cow had backed to the end of her tether, and with raised ears was staring at me with a world of reproach and misgivings in her eyes.

My fevered gaze took in the doctor holding his sides, the tears running down his cheeks, his head thrown back, and his mouth open, roaring with laughter, while the assistant, clasping his hands over his stomach like a man far gone with cholera, was allowing that he "Never — haw! haw! — saw such a — hee! haw! ho! — sight in — haw! — my — ki! hi! ho! haw! — life — hoo! haw!" I reminded them somewhat heatedly that I had engaged them to treat that cow, and that if I knew myself, and I thought I did, I did n't propose to furnish any further entertainment as an acrobat, and that they had better get onto their job.

After they had helped me to crawl, somewhat disjointedly, out of the manger, they closed in on the cow in order to show me how easily professional training can accomplish what mere brute force had failed to do. They were not wholly successful except as acrobatic rivals to me, for the way that small Jersey jiu-jitsu-ed them about and around that stall bordered on the marvellous.

It was now my turn to enjoy the proceedings, which I did to the utmost, and especially was I delighted when she stepped on the assistant's leg and bent it several inches out of plumb, bent the doctor backwards over the side partition of the stall until I distinctly heard his spinal verte-

oræ grate, and finally kicked the assistant in the stomach, which, judging from the wheezy succession of spasmodic grunts and gasps, caused him "Non-rhythmic diaphragmatic pulsations," which promised never to cease.

Time was called and the combatants separated to give the assistant an opportunity to obtain a new supply of oxygen and to bend his leg back into shape.

After a consultation the doctor, who had once punched cattle on the plains, procured a lasso, twirled it around his head until it sang like a glass bottle on a string, and essayed to cast it over the cow's horns just as the assistant wandered into its orbit and was brought down with a stunning, stinging swipe just above the ear, which did much to heighten my enjoyment and to reconcile me to my own acrobatic performance that had afforded them so much delight and amusement. Really, "he laughs best who laughs last."

After the assistant had recovered and suitable apologies had been made, a second cast was made, was more successful, and the patient was speedily trussed up and filled with the fearful brew. The doctor then repacked his apparatus, told me he thought she would do, and I then asked, as a matter of prevention, for some directions for the care of the animal in the future, and was

informed that a microscopic protozoön of the diaphragm of a young cow was due, according to Brusaferro, to Metastrogulus Micrurus, or to Balantidium Coli. It is mighty gratifying to know this, and puts the matter of protection right in one's hands.

He further informed me that I must positively guard against Mycotic Apthous Stomatitis. I told him that I would be on the guard, even should ten thousand foes arise, and he grunted again, this time I believe with appreciation. He went on to say that I must be extremely careful to avoid feeding her with anything containing the germs of Pleurodymia, Verminous Epistaxis, or Chronic Timpanites. I promised him on my sacred honor that anything of that nature that could be detected by a high-powered microscope, a naturally inquiring disposition, and the thorough knowledge of predatory and noxious germs that he had imparted to me, would be detected and side-stepped, ducked and avoided.

He approved of my determination highly, and to further increase my precautions he charged me under no considerations to expose her to Erythema, Impetigo, Polygonum Hydropiper, Pityriasis, or Scleroderma.

Then he presented his bill, which was extremely modest considering his great and polysyllabic learning, which bill I not only promptly paid,

but pressed an extra fifty cents into his palm. I felt that the saving to me by his prompt and effective treatment was so great that I could cast aside considerations of expense and be lavishly generous.

Then the doctor spun his motor until the entire machine shuddered, embarked with his assistant and his plumber's outfit, and rattled out of the yard.

To-night my cow is decidedly better and gives promise of complete recovery, and in my accurate and detailed knowledge of what to avoid in her care and feeding, the future looks rosy.

But really, in strict confidence and as one man to another, I'll be hanged if I know just what ailed that infernal cow.

Monday, May 20, 191–. My cow was much better to-day. Of course her illness cut her milk production down to about a quart at a milking. So my pigs have had short commons as far as milk is concerned. But they can eat a mixture of stock feed, shorts, and hot, not too hot, water with a good appetite and with good results. Have put in corn to-day, the second succession. The first is up just a trifle. My beans are up, and I shall put in pole beans this week. Pole beans are more easily gathered. I find that when I bend over too much that black specks fly before my eyes.

I am glad I am not a professional lawn-mower. By that I mean the man whose life from May to October is devoted exclusively to lawn-mowing. It is bad enough to spend from one half to a full hour each day at it. That cow is surely a grass absorber. Yet I still think the idea good. The cow must be fed. The lawns ought to be mowed. If you do not feed the cow, she dies. If you do not mow the lawn, the grass flourishes, but your place looks as unkempt as a man with longish hair and a shiny Prince Albert coat. Still no great or irreparable harm is done if the lawn is neglected. And a man of my easy, not to say lazy disposition is prone to neglect his lawns. But a lover of domestic animals seldom neglects them, however given to laziness. In consequence, as long as this cow needs grass I shall regularly mow the lawns and the result will be beneficial to the cow and to the looks of the lawn.

Really, I think I have planned the sequence in the most logical manner. Still, I am free to say that I do not regard the mower as a friend. Rather as a master.

Tuesday, May 21, 191–. I heard my first bobolink to-day and stopped hoeing my beans to go to the fence and look across the field and listen. It is really quite a succession of thrills to hear day after day the familiar notes of old friends from

the South. And the bobolink is one of the oldest and best. What a chap he is, to be sure? It seems as if the orange-shouldered, black-breasted little rascal would burst with the enthusiasm of his own music.

His voice is not sweet. There is a metallic rattle to some of his tones that make them harsh. Compared with it the voice of the song sparrow, the wood thrush, and the rose-breasted grosbeak are far sweeter and more melodious, as is the plaintive note of the bridge pewee rising high and sweet above the rush of the spring freshet. Yet there is a rush and bubble of thronging notes, and a quiver of wings and head and body that carry me away like a brilliant instrumentalist with a wonderful technique.

And yet his mating song, however delightful, does not affect me nearly as much as when in August, with his drab travelling dress, he flies with others of his family over the closely mown fields and gives the monotonous "Spink," "Spink," of farewell. One of the latest birds to come, he is one of the earliest to go, and the fields seem pathetically silent after his departure.

Wednesday, May 22, 191–. My potatoes are up about an inch. Potatoes are handsome plants. Dark green rippled foliage. I am told that I ought to spray as soon as they are above the ground.

And a striped bug can undo in a night the perspiring work of weeks. Luckily they are easily destroyed, but eternal vigilance is the price one must pay if he would have any potatoes, and I am determined to have some potatoes if I have to burst a button to do it.

A few years ago I tried to raise some and was told to spray them with Paris green so much to the gallon. Thinking that if the scheduled amount of P. G. per gallon would produce dead bugs, I naturally decided that double the amount would produce still deader bugs. With the praiseworthy intention of doing a most thorough job I put two tablespoonfuls of the powder where one was the prescribed dose, and having thoroughly mixed it, sprayed the potato plants. Then, wishing to surprise my wife, I sprayed her immense bed of rosebushes and the ramblers at the corner of the house, as the rose bugs were coming in swarms to attend a convention, evidently of rose bugs and potato bugs, to devise certain measures of common interest to the pirate community.

My intentions were of the purest, but the result was disheartening when its effect on my potatoes and my wife's roses was considered. In three days the leaves of the rosebushes and the entire foliage of the potatoes had been killed, and the bugs, too, for not a neighbor was visited by either rose or potato bug that season.

I tried to look at our misfortune in the light of pure altruism, and to induce my wife to view it in that light. I might have succeeded myself, but I failed entirely in the case of my wife. She was very much disturbed over it and made it quite a personal matter. And even now, after several years have elapsed, when we are thinking up things to say to each other, things that will bring the blush of shame to our faces, and cut and burn and crush and mortify, she refers pointedly to my conduct on that day when I "went to work deliberately — deliberately, I say — to spoil all the beautiful roses that I had worked so hard to raise and to have something on the place that did n't look like a hurrah's nest, so there!"

Thursday, May 23, 191–. I got some prepared poison, mixed a gallon, and sprayed the potatoes. I was very careful to follow directions accurately. I must have some potatoes this fall. I planted a couple of rows of carrots and a row of tomatoes to-day.

My pigs are thriving to an extraordinary degree. I find that pigweed is the green they are sinfully addicted to. Pigweed is not a garden product that confers much credit on a farm or on a farmer, nor is "pusley," yet they have their uses like nux vomica and mild cathartics. And if you could see my pigs literally gorging them-

selves on pigweed and my hens working away on the pile of pusley that I pull out of the garden, you would think that everything has its use.

Friday, May 24, 191–. Nearly a frost this morning. I should have felt that national bankruptcy had struck me had my corn and beans been nipped.

Saturday, May 25, 191–. Gosh! how much grass that cow does eat!

Sunday, May 26, 191–. Forgot to cut an extra supply of grass for the cow yesterday. I don't think my lawn-mower was ever so resoundingly vocal as it was this morning. I don't object to working on Sunday. In fact, Sunday is a great clean-up day for me. But I hate to do work of a nature that attracts the notice of all good men and true within a radius of a half-mile. However, my cow had to be fed and so I mowed most stridently.

Monday, May 27, 191–. I heard to-day that I was held up in two pulpits, the Methodist and the Baptist, yesterday, as a dreadful example of Sabbath-breaking.

Well, I might have let my cow loose to have an unlimited whack at my growing crops and

have saved my reputation. But then I might have lost my cow from over-feeding. On the whole I break even.

Tuesday, May 28, 191–. Barring lawn-mowing, to which I am an abject slave, have done no farm work to-day. My law practice is getting vastly annoying.

Wednesday, May 29, 191–. Busy overtime in the office. Really I wish that litigants would postpone their differences until fall and winter.

Thursday, May 30, 191–. Rain again. We need it.

Friday, May 31, 191–. A glorious day and I had to take depositions in my office all day. I got one welcome respite this afternoon when my wife telephoned me that the pigs were out and careering all over the neighborhood.

I declared a recess, commandeered a motor and the Chief of Police who was leaning against a post, and we shot for my farm with the cut-out roaring, in plain violation of traffic rules. But then what can you expect from the Justice of the Municipal Court and the Chief of Police?

When we got to my farm we saw a very amusing sight. On the opposite side of the street from my house is my sisters' house, and evidently

these ladies were having a piazza tea when both pigs, believing themselves invited, had accepted the tacit invitation and had joyfully essayed to mount the steps, and were only prevented by my schoolma'am sister, who seized a broom and soundly lambasted them as she skipped from one end of the steps to the other, suffering no caitiff to cross the moat, while the guests stood on chairs and shrieked hysteric directions.

As soon as I arrived the pigs recognized me with joyful grunts and followed me across the street and into my yard, and the siege was raised, the ladies descended from chairs, and the subtle flavor of Best Hyson, "Which do you prefer, lemon or cream and sugar?" stole across the soft May atmosphere. And then with my *entourage* I went back to my depositions.

Saturday, June 1, 191–. Every pleasant first of June should be a legal holiday. More than this, no indoor work of any nature, beyond works of necessity and mercy, should be allowed by law. When a perfect summer day is ushered in by every bird in New England with fluty trills and warbles and chirps and grace notes, and the grass is like green velvet dashed with pearls, and the sky is blue as in an Italian painting, and the air as soft and moist as a baby's breath, and the scent of lilacs and apple blossoms and flowering

quince, then severe penalties should be visited upon any one who willingly works indoors. And I have an engagement to hear, as referee, a case that will take at least two days.

And I want to be out, oh, I want to be out in the open!

Finished case this noon. I thought I was entitled to a half-day off. Had no sooner got to work with hand cultivator when I was notified of juvenile case at Police Court. I dislike juvenile cases more than any others. I am afraid I sympathize altogether too much with the delinquents. It was not so long ago, at least in memory, that I was a juvenile myself.

Finished the case at six o'clock and came home thoroughly out of tune. It was a bad case, a thoroughly bad case, so bad and so hopeless that I had to send two boys to the State Industrial School, a gentler name for the Reform School. And this is a June day, with birds singing, and trout leaping, and flowers blooming, and the water in the old swimming hole as warm as milk, and everything calling one out of doors.

And these were healthy boys, made for swimmin' 'n' fishin' 'n' playin' baseball, 'n' trampin' in the woods 'n' boatin' 'n' ever'thing. And they were bad. Not merely mischievous and high-spirited like young puppies, but mean and treacherous and bad.

So they had to go, for their own benefit and more for the benefit of the other small boys and girls, whom their influence would surely injure. But what an awful thing to be put away in June! Do you wonder that my day is spoiled?

Sunday, June 2, 191–. The robins in the nest in the spruce tree are large enough to stand up, and they make a prodigious noise when the old ones feed them. As this happens about every three minutes from morning until night, I am afraid their noise will attract some vagrant cat. It would be the easiest thing in the world for a cat to rob the nest. We are all on the lookout. I am going to buy an air rifle. It is accurate at up to fifty yards, will sting a cat outrageously, but will not injure it.

I think wandering cats should be shot at sight, but a genuine rifle is a dangerous thing to use in a community.

I got in a good day's work, to-day. The grass on the uncultivated part of my place is so long that I can tether the cow and sheep there. I use a light steel chain attached with a swivel to a picket pin resembling a bayonet.

Monday, June 3, 191–. Bought an air rifle known as a thousand-shot rifle. Not having a dog I tried it on the cow at fifty yards. She gave a violent

Got one shot to-day at a Maltese Tom

jump, kicked up her heels and shook her horns. I think it will be effective. When working in my garden I shall keep my trusty rifle ready to defend myself against predatory cats and dogs. Got one shot to-day at a Maltese Tom. He was not near the nest, but he was on my premises. He got off my premises with wild leaps, magnified tail, and distended eyeballs.

Tuesday, June 4, 191–. Got another shot at a cat to-day. A big, rusty black cat with one depressed ear. He was crossing the lawn near the spruce. I wonder why the antelope is said to be the fleetest animal that runs. I really do not believe the antelope lives that could have kept up with that cat a moment after that shot hit him.

It is interesting to be able to so develop an animal's capabilities by such simple means. Really the rifle is a great agent of reform.

Wednesday, June 5, 191–. Planted turnips to-day. Think a succession of turnips as necessary as of corn. Must bush my peas soon. No game to-day. I am forcibly reminded of the Pilgrim Fathers who alternately cultivated their crops and took pot shots at the wily aborigine. It makes one's work more interesting, and if farmers would equip their sons with artillery of this sort more boys would stay on the farm.

Thursday, June 6, 191–. In a very few days those young robins will be big enough to leave the nest. Missed a cat to-day. The shot struck just in front of him and he stopped short, then ran. I pumped a couple more shots, but he was out of range. Oh, well, one cannot always hit the mark. To see if the rifle shot high or low, I took a shot at Galatea as she stood in her pen facing away from me. Made a clean shot. She gave a surprised "Woof! Woof!" ran to the other end of her pen and faced round with her ears pricked up and a look of surprised interrogation on her face.

Friday, June 7, 191–. There is a kingbird's nest in an old apple tree at the end of the garden. I have never found one before so near the house. I also found a catbird's in the Von Hutei bushes surrounding the henyard, and there is, I am sure, the nest of a rose-breasted grosbeak near. I hear the song mornings, and the businesslike snip of his shears during the day, and see him frequently, but I can't locate the nest.

Saturday, June 8, 191–. Nailed a wicked-looking yellow cat to-day, with a snaky neck and panther-shaped head. "He stood not upon the order of his going." I wonder how long a cat runs after he is out of sight? These speculations are vastly

interesting from a scientific and statistical standpoint.

Sunday, June 9, 191–. My neighbors are for the most part church-going, respectable, God-fearing people. I am afraid I am not very popular with them. While I worked in my garden on my knees to-day, as that position is less ostentatious and also very effective in weeding, I was practically hidden. As I looked at them pacing solemnly along in their best clothes, with thoughts attuned to sacred things, I thought how easy it would be to change the most devout, the most kindly, the most gentle among them into a ravening wolf, seeking my blood with blasphemous language.

Just a careful aim at a manly leg encased in summer trousers, a frenzied jump, a wild yell, and the thing were done, and a lifetime, perhaps, of good works and resolutions shattered beyond redemption. I thought of this and stayed my hand, but I felt the old longing which got me into so much trouble when I was a boy.

Monday, June 10, 191–. If the lawn-mower had been invented in the days of the "Glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome," I feel sure that all the convicted criminals and slaves would not have been chained to the heavy

oars of the trireme. If it were a question now as to whether I would prefer to be a galley slave or a lawn-mower slave, I am uncertain as to which I would prefer. No, I will take that back. I am sure I should prefer the galleys to the mower, for I could work on the galleys sitting down.

Tuesday, June 11, 191–. I think my wife is overdoing the salad business. Just because my lettuce has headed beautifully there is no reason why I should be compelled or even expected to eat lettuce salad twice a day.

Wednesday, June 12, 191–. Got up at five o'clock and tramped into the woods for bushes for my telephone peas.

I saw almost every sort and condition of bird that ever breeds in New Hampshire, and I found more nests than I had seen since a boy. Then just before I came back there was a whining sound, and a mother partridge threw herself almost at my feet, limping, fluttering, dying apparently. But I had seen partridges and I froze as she was signalling her chicks to do. After a few minutes, seeing that I made no move and believing her chicks safe, she shot away like a bullet and went winnowing through the tree-trunks and out of sight.

Pacing solemnly along in their best clothes

Then I looked carefully after her chicks and at last I found one. It was motionless. I took it in my hand where it crouched without making a sound or motion. What a tiny little russet midget it was! To the ordinary observer it would be difficult to distinguish it from a full-blooded, black-red game bantam chick. But to one who knows, there is a wide difference, not the least of which is the indescribable mark of the wild bird. Then I put it down carefully and walked away, using the utmost care not to step on a crouching chick. A few yards from the chick and I looked back. I could not see it. Had it stolen away? If so it had disobeyed its mother, who had told it to freeze and to stay frozen. Carefully I tiptoed back. Sure enough it was there and had not moved, but its protective color had blended so closely with the dead leaves that I could not have found it again had I not known where it was.

Then I carefully walked away and left it. If I had had time enough I should have waited and watched for the return of the mother, but I was due at the farm and I hurried home, having forgotten all about my bushes for the peas in my interest in the birds. On the whole, I believe I won't bush the peas. I think a few stakes and some strong cord will do equally well. I cannot get bushes without going into the woods, and

I find I cannot be trusted to remember anything in the woods.

Lettuce salad twice to-day.

Thursday, June 13, 191–. There is going to be a hunger strike at my place soon. Hard manual labor and not time enough to finish anything demands food of a coarse and sustaining nature three times a day. I am not a rabbit.

Friday, June 14, 191–. Some one said something about the big baseball game between Exeter and Andover coming off to-morrow. Am I going? I am not.

Saturday, June 15, 191–. My usual luck. Police Court all the afternoon, when I was intending to take a half-day off and (no, I was not going to the game) spray my potatoes. I did not finish the case until five o'clock. It was the usual fool quarrel that ended in a fight with all hands joining in a free-for-all. What a waste of time, money and energy! How much more satisfactory it would have been to have the principals in the affair fight it out under the Marquis of Queensberry's, or the London Prize Ring rules, fighters to break at the referee's order, one-half minute rounds, no hitting in clinches.

Then the matter would have proved interesting, the parties would have been satisfied, honor would have been appeased, and a permanent peace would have been established. As it is, every one is mad with every one else, and both parties are mad with me, the party convicted and fined perhaps justifiably so, and the complainant because of the fact that I did not sentence the respondent to jail.

And I have not sprayed my potatoes because I had to mow a double allowance for that insatiable cow, as to-morrow is Sunday. All the time I was mowing, crowds of Exeter people were rushing from the ballfield, waving crimson banners and probably pitying the unfortunate old man who was compelled to work on a lawn while a game was going on.

Sunday, June 16, 191–. The strike is on. Did great work in garden. Crops fairly jumping ahead.

Monday, June 17, 191–. Strike called off. Compromise. My wife may have all the lettuce and other salads she wants. I don't have to wait, but may pitch into the essentials and get back to work. After a couple of hours of hard work the essentials are corned beef, roast, steak and onions, and like Christian food.

Tuesday, June 18, 191–. I have been expecting a sizable check from my publishers. I don't like to use money earned in my profession to pay for my fads. I periodically receive checks for books I have occasionally published. If it were not for these checks I don't see how I could indulge in the expensive pastime of even limited farming.

Wednesday, June 19, 191–. Thank Heaven I can eke out the rations of my pigs with green stuff from the garden. The price of grain gives me food for very serious thought. Still, there is no use worrying, for my check is about due. I never speculate about the amount. There is no use in doing that. When it comes it will be very welcome. I am feeding as little grain as possible.

Thursday, June 20, 191–. No check to-day. A watched pot never boils. Still the periodical visit of the mail carrier makes me feel a bit as I feel while waiting for the jury to come in.

Friday, June 21, 191–. Jury still out.

Saturday, June 22, 191–. The mail carrier brought me a letter from a different publisher of mine. I opened it with the feeling of expectation one has when, at Christmas or on his birthday, he finds a package at his plate at breakfast.

The letter was as follows:

"DEAR SIR: The apparent impossibility of selling any more copies of your book entitled '——' renders a new edition unnecessary. One binder insists that he must have the space now occupied by the sheets of '——' and he obliges us to remove them *muy pronto* if not prior thereto.

"Will pack and send sheets to you for expenses of packing and freightage or sell them for old paper, as you prefer."

I laid down this reassuring epistle. And this was one of the books that I was relying on to boost my farming enterprise.

Well, I have the other report due at this time. Cheer up! It is always darkest just before the dawn. Something is always turning up. Only this morning I got a terrific bill for grain.

Sunday, June 23, 191–. Worked all day and broke the Sabbath into many and jagged pieces.

Monday, June 24, 191–. Jury still out, at least the first jury. I think I ought to have a good verdict to make up for the hard luck of yesterday. However, I did not let it interfere with my farm work. If I get the doldrums, a few miles' promenade in the rear of that infernal lawn-mower never fails to divert my thoughts. It is a relief to have something to swear at. I am becoming

very fluent and am daily adding to a very comprehensive vocabulary. If the jury brings in anything but a substantial verdict, I shall have to coin a few more original cusswords. There is a wealth of cusswords still uncoined.

Tuesday, June 25, 191–. I forgot to make a note of the date when the young robins left the nest, but it was about a week ago. I think we did not lose one and they can all fly now. I got several shots at cats and hastened their departure beyond belief. I believe the cat is the lineal descendent of the cheetah which can even overtake the antelope. It has the faculty, however, of running long distances which the cheetah cannot do. The cat is a very quick starter. At the sting of the shot the cat is in the air clawing for speed, and getting it every time.

I expect every day that the robins will build again. There are three other robins' nests in the yard with young birds in them. I am becoming a terror to predatory cats. In fact, during the summer season every cat of whatever station is a predatory cat

Wednesday, June 26, 191–. Jury came in to-day. I held my breath with expectation as I took the letter, placed it with apparent carelessness on my desk, and continued my conversation with a

client. When he retired, after an unconscionably long consultation, I took up my letter. It is my custom to leave to the last that one that I am sure will be pleasantest of the lot, so as to quit with a sweet taste in my mouth.

For instance, the first letter I get from my daughter at her school, after I have sent a check for her monthly expense account and a trifle over for good measure and other things, I leave to the last because I know it will be funny, bright, and interesting. And this I do with several in succession until toward the end of the month. Then I read that letter first to know the worst and make out a check and have it over.

So following this custom I read my other letters through carefully and made pencil memoranda as a guide for answers. Then with a pleasant feeling of expectation I took up my publisher's letter and opened it with deliberation, unfolded the enclosures, and had a touch of heart failure when I saw no check. My symptoms became more marked as I read the semi-annual report:

To 14 copies "—" at 15c. royalty	$2.10	By 10 copies sent author at cost price	$6.50
21 " "—" at 15c. "	3.15	5 " " " " "	2.50
19 " "—" at 9c. "	1.71	7 " " " " "	4.90
Total sales	$6.96		
Due from author	6.94		
	$13.90		$13.90

I put the envelope down mechanically, lit a cigarette and puffed violently. Then I read the

report carefully and added the columns. The figures were correct. I owed my publisher six dollars and ninety-four cents. Well, it is lucky that I still have a fairly remunerative law practice and had the good sense not to quit it for literature. I am not a shining success as a lawyer, but I make a little more than a comfortable living and I do not have to pay for the privilege.

I drew my check for the amount and sent it off. One thing my profession has taught me; not to waste time in worrying over an adverse verdict, however unexpected.

Thursday, June 27, 191–. Had my first peas from garden to-day. Served in a restaurant they would have been billed as "Petits Pois au Beurre." They were delicious, if somewhat immature.

Friday, June 28, 191–. I am acquiring a pronounced tan, and my hands are hard. The early crop of blisters has completely disappeared.

Saturday, June 29, 191–. Cutworms are causing me some loss and annoyance. They have rather more than decimated my cabbage plants and cauliflowers. There is a certain "stern joy that warriors feel" in squashing them. They are exceedingly pulpy and therefore squashable.

Sunday, June 30, 191–. An unfortunate thing happened this morning. I tethered my cow in the grass, driving the pin to the head in rather solid turf. It would seem that any reasonable cow would have been satisfied to remain in lush grass to her knees. But not this thief of the world, for she took advantage of my protracted absence in the pigpen, which I was industriously and malodorously cleaning, scraping, and bedding, to pull up her picket pin and strike a beeline for my cabbages where she ate almost my entire crop before I appeared in rubber boots and amid hideous profanity.

The Professor of English who lives next to me was at that time escorting to church a distinguished Doctor of Divinity, a College President, and a Y.M.C.A. officer, who were to conduct services in the Academy Chapel that morning, and apparently the entire population of the street, with my exception, were hastening to attend the services in question, when I burst upon the scene and took up the chase of the cow around the yard, voicing my opinions in tones that could have been heard in a deaf-mute sanitarium.

This unfortunate occurrence mortified my wife beyond measure and, I am afraid, did not improve my standing in the community. But there are some things that no mere mortal can bear

without sinful repinings, sometimes expressed in a high key; and whatever my standing, I do not have any difficulty in persuading them to accept specimens of my farm produce when carefully washed and neatly packed.

Of course it is embarrassing to one's friends to be held up in pulpits as a bad example, but really there are worse people than I. Not many, perhaps, but occasionally such are mentioned in the newspapers as malefactors of great wealth, thieves, robbers, and highwaymen.

It seems scarcely possible that July will come in to-morrow, the hot, dry month. I have added scythe-mowing to my lot of accomplishments. The grass has got so long in the field part of my farm that I use the scythe. I was advised to buy several blades. It was good advice.

Monday, July 1, 191–. Time was when I should have been hoarding every penny for the Fourth and thinking that the Fourth would never come. Now I am grudging the days that fly past and hoarding every penny to keep abreast of the high prices.

Tuesday, July 2, 191–. I am learning something about scythe-mowing. I was told to always keep my heel down. To obey instructions, which did not specify which heel, the right or left, I walked,

when mowing, flat-footed, and thereby kept both heels down. I now find that it was the heel of the scythe that I was to keep down. I learned this too late to save three scythe blades. I did not break them, but left them looking somewhat like gigantic flattened corkscrews or Malay kris or the spiral horns of a South African koodoo.

Wednesday, July 3, 191–. I have one scythe blade left. I know how to mow now. I also put in my daily promenade behind the lawn-mower, but the dry weather has shortened my beat. My pigs are a delight to the eye.

Thursday, July 4, 191–. Holiday and cool enough to make a fine work day. I put in almost the entire day, mowing, cultivating, cleaning up, hoeing and other work.

Friday, July 5, 191–. Glad I did so much work yesterday. Tried a case before a referee to-day that left me no time for the farm. It is true that the law is a jealous mistress. Still, a man must have some exercise to avoid going stale. On the whole, I think I get it.

Saturday, July 6, 191–. A thunderstorm in the night turned into a steady rain which lasted all day. I was disappointed at not being able to

work in the garden, but found enough to do in the barn, including oiling the pigs. I bought a patent oiler which so far no skilled artisan in this vicinity has been able to set up. I find a currycomb dipped in oil very soothing to the pigs. Indeed, I find, somewhat to my surprise, that a currycomb is appreciated by pigs and cows much more than by horses. Also that a cow's coat will take a polish much more readily than will a horse's coat.

Sunday, July 7, 191–. Some young chipper birds are out of the nest. Although they are less conspicuous than young robins and much better flyers, yet I am minded of the injunction, "In time of peace prepare for war." And I have got out my rifle once more. Saw the droop-eared Tom walking on the fence to-day. It was a fine target and I felt sure I scored a bull's-eye. In trying to jump off on both sides of the fence at once he delayed long enough for me to get in another shot. He may be running yet. He started as if he never meant to stop. I wish he never would.

By this simple, homely, but effective agency I try to instil into the minds of vagrant Toms a warning to keep their distance.

Monday, July 8, 191–. With fresh milk and cream, fresh eggs, peas, string beans, beet

greens, chard, and radishes, life seems one grand song.

Tuesday, July 9, 191–. Still singing. Nailed a cat wearing a nickel-plated collar to-day. She did not stop long enough for me to read the inscription thereon. Indeed, he who runs would have had to be a phenomenal sprinter to have read it.

Wednesday, July 10, 191–. Planted turnips again to-day. Also sprayed potatoes.

Thursday, July 11, 191–. Some sort of infernal bug or decay or blight has struck one of my rows of beans. Yesterday they were green and fair to look upon. To-day between dawn and noontide they have turned a dark brown, leaves, fruit, and stems, and have dried up as if they had been scorched by the flames of burning Ilium.

"Yesterday they might have stood against the world,
Now none so poor to do them reverence."

I at once took counsel with the hardware man who sells all sorts of anti-bug mixtures. He told me to pluck, pile, and burn at once the affected plants. Then to spray the undersides of the plant with a certain liquid designated by a series of numbers neatly embossed on the can in scarlet letters.

I took the can, and at his suggestion bought

a new hand-sprayer, notified my clerk that urgent business matters required my instant presence at the farm, and hurried thither with my can and squirt gun. I at once pulled every plant in the infected row, piled them, poured on a liberal libation of kerosene, and in a few moments they were reduced to the finest ashes. Then I unscrewed the cap of the can, sniffed once, replaced the cap with averted face and trembling fingers, and took a hurried walk.

Now, I have smelled horrid odors full many a time. Any man who has dealt with all sorts of animals and all sorts of humans, as I have, has taught himself to weather almost every variety of odors without repining. Up to this time the most awful odor I ever experienced was when, on returning from a two weeks' vacation with my family, I found I had neglected to remove from an old-fashioned refrigerator a few dozen frogs' legs, and as a result I had to give the refrigerator to a junkman upon the condition that he would remove it instantly and without argument or examination.

But the dreadfulness of the odor was as nothing compared to the acute and amazing villainy of the smell of this compound. I would n't have used it if my entire crop was at stake, and after playing the garden hose on it for a while I buried the sealed can in the garden, and sprayed the

rest of the beans with the usual preparation. It may be effective and may not. Just at this moment I do not care particularly. I have washed my hands with every sort of soap, but although none of that dreadful remedy touched them, I can still smell it. I wonder if I always shall.

Friday, July 12, 191–. We have peas at least three times a week. Regular gorges. Somewhere I have heard or read that

> "The honest farmer, who by intelligent toil
> Tills the soil,
> Will surely win respect."

I have quoted this, but I have n't the least idea where I got it.

Saturday, July 13, 191–. Two more broods of young robins are hopping round the yard. One brood from the big oak behind the house and one from the Porter apple tree in the orchard. Broke the spring of my rifle to-day. I could not get a new one in town and have sent to Boston. Worked all day on farm.

Sunday, July 14, 191–. That infernal droop-eared cat got a young robin to-day. I heard the cries of the parent birds and of a dozen others coming to the rescue and I ran toward the noise. I was in time to see the cat with the bird in its mouth

dash over the fence and disappear in the bushes on the adjoining place. I yelled for Dick to bring his gun and he responded with two and a dozen shells. We quartered over the ground for a half-hour, but did not find the cat. I have thought of it all day. Damn cats, anyway!

Monday, July 15, 191–. Too busy at the office to do more than the routine work on the farm, milking, feeding, cleaning stalls, etc.

Tuesday, July 16, 191–. A heavy thunder-shower to-day. Juvenile Court to-day in my private office. I don't believe the boys are very much afraid of me.

Wednesday, July 17, 191–. This noon I had a great stroke of luck. I had finished my dinner, fed my animals, and was doing a little weeding on my hands and knees when I heard the frantic cries of the robins and the agonized chirping of a young bird. I jumped up in time to see old droop-ear leaping across the garden with a shrieking young bird in its mouth. Suddenly it leaped frantically in the air, turned a somersault, sprang up, and then crumpled in a heap. Dick who had just come out, equipped for a trap shoot, had fired twice as the cat raced across the yard, and both shots had taken effect. The bird was dead, but

not from the shot, and best of all the cat was dead. I took the greatest possible enjoyment in conducting a little private funeral.

Thursday, July 18, 191–. My corn is up to my shoulders now and is beginning to spindle. The high-water mark of amateur farming is getting a couple of dozen ears of sweet corn and making a dinner of them.

Friday, July 19, 191–. My cow broke out of jail to-day, but was rounded up before she did much damage. My clerk starts on her vacation of two weeks Monday. I shall have to stick to the office. Farming will receive a very severe setback.

Saturday, July 20, 191–. Worked with clerk all day in office.

Sunday, July 21, 191–. Busy at the office. Sometimes I think hot weather makes for litigation. Why not? Hot weather makes the average man uncomfortable and therefore touchy. I have heard that all professional cooks are quick-tempered and ready with a rolling-pin, and that this is a direct result of the heat in which they work. Well, if that is the case, I wish it would cool off, for I don't feel particularly like trying cases. It is just the weather to draw briefs and bills in

equity and declarations, and to take one's time at it. Then, after a day at it, it is delightful, in the cool of the afternoon, to get into one's old clothes and do farm work.

Monday, July 22, 191–. It has rained all day. A steady, slanting rain. It has been good to sit at my old battered desk, and to look out over the square, and to see the slanting lines of rain pouring down on the pavements, and to smell the soft air. For the past two weeks the farmers have been haying and to-day they are probably trying to catch up with their indoor work.

Nobody has been in the office, and although there is plenty of work to do, I don't feel in the mood, and sit and look out over the square, and plan my farm work, and think over the handicaps I have been laboring under, and what fun it has all been.

Indeed, when I sought anew to turn my modest estate into a miniature stock and truck farm, I did not fully realize some of the responsibilities I was ignorantly shouldering.

There are dangers, on the physical side, of breaks, strains, sprains, contusions, bites, kicks, and crowdings in the stalls. Only yesterday morning I was leaning over my cow's back and giving her a particularly thorough rubdown under the big elm in front of the barn, when the maid clum-

sily poked an ironing-board through a window taking out several panes of glass and the attendant sash, and causing that patient and milk-infested animal to make a *demi-volte* which carried me for a considerable distance in a position similar to that of a towel on a towel rack.

Of course, when such things are done by a trained acrobat in a circus they seldom injure the performer, but when performed involuntarily by a more than middle-aged farmer of little training for that particular stunt, the result is frequently painful if not lasting.

Then again one owes a duty to one's neighbors, who may not be wildly enthusiastic over the change from smooth lawns, and comparative peace and quietude, to potato and turnip patches and the homely sounds and scents of the barnyard. And so I endeavor to be very diplomatic in all my moves in relation to my farm and the introduction of animals alien to the quiet and aristocratic habits of the people dwelling in my neighborhood.

Were I to do otherwise, I fear that neighborhood reciprocity might take the form of criminal prosecutions or of poisoned potatoes. But a timely pitcher of cream will do much to avoid the operation of the *lex talionis;* and a few dozen of golden bantam corn is a panacea for all evils arising from strained neighborly relations.

Another thing one has to consider; the smell of barnyard animals is not unpleasant in its native heath, but when carried to other localities, such as to dwellings, churches, both for religious and social purposes, public meetings in crowded halls, secret society visitations and public installations, it is sniffingly resented by the captious, and one finds himself the target for resentful and reproachful looks and indignant sniffs, and the rungs of the social ladder exceedingly difficult to climb.

Then again a quick-tempered man, such as I am, ought to be a bit — quite a bit — circumspect. It must never happen again that the Professor of English, whose study windows overhang my garden fence, be so seriously annoyed as he was some time ago, when, having gathered a bevy of local savants to discuss the recondite beauty of Chaucer's "Troilus and Cressida," they were scandalized by a burst of objurgation, delivered by me in hoarse and impassioned tones, as I passed his windows at terrific speed in a perspiring, panting, and profane pursuit of an escaped pig.

And I am quite sure that the superintendent of the Sunday School, who lives across the street, will never fully forgive me for compelling his class of young men who had gathered at his house for Y.M.C.A. discussion, to listen to a

soliloquy delivered by me with all the strength of my lungs and the stimulating influence of a vivid imagination, at viewing the remains of about four dollars' worth of cauliflower plants that had suffered from a joint attack of all the cutworms in the vicinity overnight.

And yet my neighbors have been exceedingly kind and considerate. They have borne much from me, possibly more than I would have borne from them had the conditions been reversed. They have even tried to help me. Indeed, their attentions have at times been positively embarrassing. I am constantly receiving kindly offers of assistance. One lady telephoned me to please call at her house on my way home from my office. Anticipating a legal consultation I called. Judge of my feelings when she led me to the back door, informing me that when she heard that I had a pair of pigs she had saved every bit of waste from her table for a week, and would I please carry it home to them.

What could I say? She was a kindly old lady and her face beamed with altruism. I could n't tell her that I would as soon feed pigs with rat poison as with swill. I could n't tell her to keep her old swill and eat it or bury it or burn it as she pleased.

And so with loathing and rebellion in my heart I almost dislocated my arms and strained my

tendons in lugging about a hundred pounds of dreadful waste to my house a quarter of a mile away.

Another lady, more considerate of my dignity, sent a boy with a squeaking cart in which was a bucket filled to overflowing with horrid stuff.

Just out of curiosity and for the purpose of ascertaining the probability of a lingering and awful death for my pigs, should I feed the stuff to them, I took as careful an inventory of the two buckets as the nature and condition of their contents allowed. The first bucket inventoried as follows:

Item — several quarts of dishwater.
Item — the necks of two broken bottles with wire attachments.
Item — the remains of the two bottles in fragments of unassorted sizes.
Item — the semi-globular skins of several muskmelons, scraped so thin as to be transparent.
Item — several roundish articles that I took for charcoal (excellent for pigs), but which on examination proved to be hard-baked and incinerated biscuits.
Item — a chain of safety pins strung together.
Item — a very large "gob" of sour dough.
Item — the skins of several baked potatoes.
Item — a fine-toothed comb very much the worse for wear.
Item — a T bone thoroughly polished.
Item — a roll of twisted handbills advertising an auction.

I could n't tell her that I would as soon feed pigs with rat poison

Item — the yellow legs of a chicken and the skeleton from which every particle of meat had been scraped.
Item — part of a suspender.
Item — various articles impossible to classify.

The second bucket analyzed as follows:

Item — one half-dozen of "Curved Plug Tobacco" tins, empty.
Item — mass of pressed raw currants from which the life and virtue had long since departed leaving hulls and seeds about as nutritious as sawdust or chopped oyster shells.
Item — about two quarts of raw potato peelings.
Item — ditto apple peelings.
Item — cracked porcelain doorbell with several yards of wire.
Item — part of scrim curtain with broken stick.
Item — empty mucilage bottle with brush.
Item — broken lamp chimney, blacked on one side.
Item — lower set of false teeth with red rubber gums.
Item — sundry unrecognizable articles.
Item — large quantity of slop containing many substances in solution.

I removed the set of teeth, played on them with the hose, and when they were dried, used gloves to wrap them up with and then sent them by mail to the kind lady. Think how she must have hunted and worried over their loss. Certainly one good turn deserves another.

I have made half promises to call at other houses. The situation is becoming critical. It is perhaps my first and only touch of popularity.

I don't like it one single bit. Years ago with my cronies, Beany and Pewt, I drove a swill cart for a short time until the failure of the man that employed us, but I have been trying hard ever since to live it down. True, there are several ways of disposing of this waste. I can burn it on a funeral pyre; I can bury it, carrying the simile one step farther; or I can wait for the shades of evening and throw it into the grove behind the house of the Professor of English. Which shall it be? I am really uncertain and dreadfully in need of advice.

But I am determined that I will not, even to court popularity, become the scavenger, the hyæna, the turkey buzzard, the jackal of the neighborhood. I swear it.

Tuesday, July 23, 191–. To take a walk or ride into the country now and to smell the freshly cured hay is worth almost any sacrifice, even breakfast. And if you have lost your breakfast, it is but four hours to lunch or to dinner, and as soon as you have arisen from lunch or dinner you have forgotten the sacrifice.

I took a walk this morning after I had finished my barn work and became so absorbed in the delights of the newly mowed field that it was long after breakfast when I got home, and I had an appointment at nine. I had no breakfast, not

even a cup of coffee, but I kept my appointment, worked like a pup until noon, and came home with a headache that reached from the bridge of my nose to the back of my neck.

But after a good dinner and a cup of black coffee I was as good as new, and could think of that beautiful field with its haycocks, its half-dozen nests of field mice each full of naked young mice; of the two nests of bobolinks with the young nearly full-fledged and bearing the unmistakable colors of the male bird's winter garb; of the headless black snake decapitated as he was about to make a meal of some of these innocents; of the numerous fat toads, each in the smooth round shallow cup it had either dug or worn in the earth; of the woodchuck's hole on the knoll, with its bold advertisement of yellow sand thrown out of a hole large enough for a fox.

Really it was well worth the loss of a breakfast and the splitting headache.

Wednesday, July 24, 191–. Every time I get a chance to get out into the fields and woods I take a solemn vow to repeat the experience often. But I seldom get the time or take the time to do it. As a boy and youth I spent a third of my time during the long summer days and evenings on the river, and each spring I make up my mind that I will buy a skiff or canoe and emulate the brave

deeds of Ossian as set forth in his once well-known serenade.

But I never do it. I wonder why. Perhaps old man Osler may be able to explain it. Hang Osler, anyway.

Thursday, July 25, 191–. I wish my clerk would get back. I don't mind sticking close to the office during office hours, but I hate to take so much time out of my evenings to write longhand letters. I wonder if I am really the worst writer of a profession noted for the abandoned character of its penmanship? My correspondents are unanimous in the opinion that I am far and away the worst. I think they are not above prejudice in the matter.

However, it is sometimes convenient to be able to read your own handwriting in various ways. A really intelligent man can adapt his correspondence to almost any situation that may arise. It is well to make the best out of these peculiarities.

Friday, July 26, 191–. In almost every Christian community except my own, Saturday afternoon is given up, at least by the lawyers, to the pursuit of golf balls. This is the most praiseworthy undertaking possible and should be encouraged by drastic legislation. Unfortunately the wily farmer, having worked intensively during the

entire week, takes Saturday afternoon to renew his supplies and to call upon his lawyer friends for gratuitous advice.

Saturday, July 27, 191–. Imagination is a curious thing and plays curious tricks. Yesterday my life was despaired of owing to a dreadful accident that befell me when I was in the peaceful performance of my duties as a plain and ornamental agriculturist and stock-breeder. It seems positively unjust that an

"*Integer vitæ scelerisque purus*" —

or at least reasonably so — who

"*Non eget Mauris jaculis neque arcu*" —

or at least is not supposed to — should be cut down in his prime or thereabouts while doing the plain and homely duties pertaining to home agriculture. Especially is this so, when steeplejacks are steeple-jacking in perfect safety all over the country; when birdmen are loudly flapping their wings and crowing thousands of feet above the earth, with their life insurance policies still in force; when motor-cyclists, with their best girls in abbreviated costumes and wearing their skirts about their ears, are dashing around corners and adown crowded streets at seventy miles an hour with no danger to themselves and the deuce take the public; when all over the country people are

risking their lives without mishaps in a thousand dare-devil ways.

Such thoughts crowded into my brain as I tottered into the house to die yesterday morning and so frightened my wife that I am afraid she will never be the same woman again.

I had arisen unusually early, as there had been a heavy thunder-shower and I could n't sleep. It was still so cloudy that the stalls in the cow stable were rather dark. When I entered the stall my cow swung her head round fretfully and stuck me a blow that nearly knocked the wind out of me for a moment. I retired gruntingly to regain my wind so as to more fully express my sentiments, when to my horror I found that I was covered with blood. She had evidently driven her sharp horn deep into my side. Somehow I felt but little pain, and supposed it was from the sudden paralysis of the nerves. I dully recollected that really serious and fatal injuries are seldom painful, and I realized then that if I had any alterations to make in my will I had better see about it as soon as possible. I was evidently bleeding to death very rapidly and I did not like to be found lifeless in a cow stable —

"Weltering in my gore" —

as the victims of one Captain Kidd erstwhile were prone to do, according to that delightful poem.

I realized, of course, that a ligature or tourniquet, would, from the locality of the wound, be ineffective except to shut off my wind, and that, in the progress of events, would be shut off soon enough. So, holding my hand over the jagged puncture in my side, I walked feebly, but with determination, into the house and called my wife. Something in the quiet precision of my voice told her that something serious had happened, and she came running down in her nightgown, and as soon as she saw my blood she broke into a loud and exceedingly bitter cry.

She knew that dreadful, horrid, dangerous, ugly beast would kill me! She never had wanted me to get her! I never knew anything about cows anyway! Any one could cheat me, and would sell me kicking horses and hooking and goring cows and all manner of awful beasts and I might have known it, and she knew it all the time and knew just what would happen, and why could n't I have been contented to buy my milk and not go risking my life every moment I was in that horrid barn, not knowing anything about animals and not being able or wishing to hire a man to take care of them who knew something about them, and whose life or death did n't amount to anything, and who did n't have any one depending on him as I did, etc., etc.

All the time she had been helping me to the

couch in the living-room, for I was growing very faint and weak with the loss of blood, while Dick, who had come down stairs like a man in the delirium tremens pursued by centipedal rattlesnakes, was ringing up Central and demanding why in blankety blank and rippety dash they were all asleep in the middle of the day (Dick who never gets up before half-past eight unless he is pulled out of bed), and telling the doctor to come up to the house, and not caring a hang if the doctor had been up all night on a confinement case, and that it was a case of life or death, and not to wait to put on his clothes; and then he came charging in with a glass of whiskey which I drank as if it were water.

While waiting for the doctor, we decided not to cut away my shirt from the wound, fearing that the flow of blood, which had somewhat slackened, might start again. So while Dick held a wet compress over my wound, my wife bathed my head and fanned me, and I gave Dick some instructions about the management of the office after I had been laid away. I even made a feeble quotation:

> "Oh, bury Bartholomew out in the field,
> In a beautiful hole in the ground."

I suppose I was somewhat affected by my potation to which I was unaccustomed.

Then an automobile tore into the yard and a hastily dressed man without collar or tie, and with his coat and vest flapping open and his shoelaces dangling, hurried up the steps and into the room. As soon as he saw my blood-stained form he became at once the cool, calm, self-possessed, resourceful surgeon.

"Get me a glass of water and a spoon; open that window and pull up that curtain; a washbowl of hot water." Then he opened his bag, laid out his shining knives, nippers, clamps, calipers, and other cutlery, spools of adhesive plaster, rolls of antiseptic dressing, and bottles of disinfectants; lit a little tin lamp, and a smell of creosote and iodoform stole across the room.

Then he threw off his coat and vest, rolled up his sleeves, and prepared to cauterize a few veins, to tie up an artery or two, and to hemstitch some Butterick patterns on my torso.

Then he wet a cloth in the warm water, knelt by the couch and carefully moistened my shirt over the wound, lifted it quickly and cut it from me, with a pair of shears. Then he washed away the blood, stared a moment, said, "Hell!" — told me to sit up, and removed my shirt, carefully examined me, ejaculated, "Well, I'll be damned!" in a fervent tone that admitted no contradiction; and said, "What in the devil's name did you get a man out of bed for at this

time of day to perform an operation on a perfectly sound man?"

"But, Doc," I stammered, "ain't there a wound?"

"Wound, nothing!" he replied with huge disgust. "You have n't a scratch!"

"But the cow certainly hooked me," I insisted, "and if she did n't gore me, where did the blood come from?"

"I don't know," replied the doctor testily, "but I'm going to find out."

So we all went to the barn after I had put on my coat, and there found that the cow had evidently caught her horn in the tie-ring and had broken it off close to her head, with the result that it had bled freely over her frontlet, and when she rubbed against me she had thoroughly smeared me with her blood instead of mine.

"Well, of all the cussed fools I ever saw, you are the cussedest!" said the doctor as he strode to the house to pack up his instruments. However, he found something to do after all, for my wife, who has a horror of blood, as soon as the danger was over had an attack of hysterics which took the doctor some time to quiet. Indeed, it was an hour before she was quiet in bed, the doctor had returned to his interrupted slumber, and I, rejoicing in my escape, was milking a cow with

a bandaged stump and a large appetite for a steaming bran mash.

I paid the doctor ten dollars for his morning trip and thought it cheap. I would willingly give that sum any day to avoid a horrid and unheroic death, or indeed any sort of a demise, heroic or otherwise.

There are people, I feel sure, who would not part with anything like that sum to keep me alive, but I am not one of them.

But, had I thus untimely perished, how my friend the editor of our local weekly would have whooped up the obituary column! I dare not imagine how many hitherto unsuspected virtues would have been attributed to me, how many undesirable qualities suppressed. Ah, well, "*De mortuis nil nisi bonum.*"

But one thing puzzles me. I know that my son and wife were genuinely alarmed about me, and are genuinely thankful that I was not injured. But in spite of this they are peeved with me and appear to think that I played a joke on them. They do not discuss the subject. At least, I have one friend in court, for my daughter was luckily away at the time and does not view the matter in the same light.

Sunday, July 28, 191–. I have misjudged farmers as a class. The farther I delve into the cultiva-

tion of the soil, and the raising of stock, the more I have come to realize that the life of a farmer is a long and hand-to-hand fight with sun and wind, rain and frosts, poison ivy, Paris green, hog cholera, grapple bugs, and all manner of creeping, crawling, and flying things.

Does the price of pork on the hoof arise to hitherto unknown altitudes, straightway his brood sow has from nine to thirteen pigs and promptly eats them all as a sort of cocktail appetizer; or cholera or some other infernal pestilence cuts them down.

Does he succeed in raising an especially likely colt, which he has just sold for an unheard-of price to a man perfectly willing and able to pay, he finds that the animal has got into a barbed-wire fence and has permanently lamed himself and the deal is off.

Does he have the banner cow of the community, which he is grooming for the County Fair, where she will undoubtedly break all the milk and butter-fat records to date, she gets into a neighbor's orchard, eats about two bushels of half-ripe apples, and goes so dry that he does n't dare use a lantern in the barn.

I am beginning to realize that the life of the farmer is not one merry and care-free accumulation of money, automobiles, blooded stock, blue ribbons, and other insignia of wealth and happi-

ness, but is much like the working lives of other classes, full of no-thoroughfares and pitfalls, to avoid which and to climb out of which, when not successfully avoided, requires great skill and great expenditure of time and money.

Only a short time ago skilled veterinarians and hideous combinations of nauseous *materia medica* were battling for the life of my beloved Jersey. To-night, in secret, and behind the "something" Von Hutei bushes, I laid away Pygmalion stiff and cold. "

I did not consult a veterinarian. I did not think his malady was serious enough to warrant anything but a course of light feeding. I only found out my mistake when this morning I found him dead. Why, I cannot say, but in a moment a line of Horace flashed into my mind from my Academy days —

> "*Psittacus Eois imitatrix ab Indis occidit*
> *Exequias ite frequenter aves.*"

Then I decided to have the funeral extremely and exclusively private. I did not wish my wife, my son, or my daughter to know just how many kinds of an infernal idiot I was. For the death of the pig was entirely my fault, and in no way caused by any ill to which pigs are heir. I had deliberately, but with no guile in my heart, given Pygmalion a feed of corn after he had eaten his

usual and generous allowance of milk and stock feed.

I liked to see his sides bulge out and his skin tighten. I wanted to make Pyg. and Gal. beat out all porcine wonders of the year. Any fool would have known better than to do what I did. I mean, of course, any other fool. But I did not, and "*Hinc illæ lacrimæ*." It is a wonder that both had not died, but Galatea is apparently as good as new. Either she was more elastic or less indulgent. At all events, Pygmalion died, and Galatea lives and flourishes. How to lay Pyg. to rest without alarming the neighborhood? That was the question.

I cautiously climbed into the pen and hoisted him out, carried him to the harness room and covered him with bagging; then finished my work in the barn, hoed a few rows of potatoes, and mowed one lawn before breakfast, and then went whistling into the house as one without a care in the world, but realizing that I had lost property to the value of at least twenty dollars and was up against a problem of concealment that called for the very highest ingenuity.

At noon I fed Galatea and was sorry to see that she apparently did not miss her chum a bit. Pigs are, I am afraid, not sensible of the finer emotions. I opened the harness-room door, half hoping I would be greeted by the comfortable grunt and

the good-natured sparkle in the twinkling eyes of Pyg., but the outline of his poor stiff form under the bags was unchanged.

When I returned for supper my wife asked where my other pig was. She said she had been to the barn and saw only one. I pretended some surprise and went out to see for myself. Had she accompanied me I should have explained Pyg.'s absence on the theory that he had jumped the fence and escaped. But as she did n't, I came back with the statement that Pyg. had got into the barn and was probably hiding when she was out there.

So I figured on burying poor Pyg. secretly and buying another shoat of the same size and color, and I felt sure that neither she nor any other member of my family would ever know of the substitution of an alien pig. So after supper I donned my barn clothes and set about my duties while my wife and daughter washed the dishes and then sat on the piazza with some friends who had run in for a short visit.

After I had milked and strained the milk and fed and bedded my cow and attended to the simple wants of my sheep, I put the pig into a wheelbarrow, covered him with bags and wheeled him down behind the Von Hutei bushes and taking a sharp spade began to dig a grave. The ground was soft and I made rapid progress, as I was in ex-

cellent condition, owing to my intensive training of the spring and summer, and before I knew it I had dug through about eighteen inches of rich loam to a stratum of clean sand, evidently Myocene formation. I was keenly interested and dug and threw out sand until I struck a stratum which seemed to me to be a marine bed of the older Tertiary, which should, in conformity to the rule, cover a Cretaceous deposit.

By this time I had dug so deep that my shoulders were about on a level with the surface, but far below the top of the mound of earth on each side of the excavation. And so interested had I become in the different strata and the geological formation, that I had entirely forgotten the object of my labors.

So I continued to dig and throw out the deposit, and sure enough soon came to the Cretaceous deposit which seemed to be mixed or blended with an argillaceous stratum of the Upper, Middle, or Lower Jurassic series. I felt sure it was of the Jurassic, as I could plainly see the concentric layers of short miniature concretions, produced by the aggregation of calcareous matters around centres, by a process of molecular attraction to which fine sediments are exceedingly liable.

Really it was exceedingly interesting, and I was completely absorbed in my discoveries until sud-

denly I struck a vein of water. It was a generous vein, too, and in a minute or two I found it over my ankles and gaining. There was nothing to do but to give up further geological excavation and climb out of the trench. This I started to do, and throwing my spade out started to follow, and then for the first time I realized that I was at the bottom of a trench so deep that I could not reach the top with my outstretched hands.

However, to climb out must be easy. Just dig foot-holds in the side of the trench and step out. I dug the holes and then to my disgust I found I had built my house on the sands, and every time I put my foot into the holes and threw my weight on them, the sand crumbled. I tried again and again, and made no headway. Well, I could dig a slanting trench and crawl out. Then I realized my stupidity in throwing away my spade. The situation was awkward. I was not worried, for I knew all I had to do was to yell for help, and it would be forthcoming accompanied by side-splitting ridicule. And I did not want to call for help if I could in any way avoid it. So I redoubled my exertions. Leaning my back against one side of the trench I braced my feet against the opposite side and tried to push myself up and out of the trench the way I had seen well-cleaners climb out of a well, but the sand crumbled and I could make no progress, and for a moment

the recollection came to me of Kipling's ghastly story about the sand pit in which lepers were kept and the sides of which crumbled whenever the poor wretches tried to get out. For a moment I felt very much inclined to call for help.

Then I tried to claw away the sides of the trench and to fill it in sufficiently to bring my head above the level of the ground so that I could grasshopper out, on the principle of an athlete on the parallel bars. I used to do the grasshopper easily in my college days and believed that, under the desperate necessity of getting out without letting any one know of my plight, I could do it again.

But I found that I only made a sticky, adhesive mud that gave me no support and had a strong tendency to glue me to the bottom of the trench. All I could think of for a moment, as I wallowed in the wet, sticky mass, was the gruesome poem:

> "They made her a grave too cold and damp
> For a soul so warm and true,
> And she's gone to the lake of the Dismal Swamp,
> Where all night long with her firefly lamp
> She paddles her white canoe."

I really do not know how I should have been able to get out, had not some one called me up on the telephone, and of course my wife came to the back door and called me. In guarded tones I told

her to come out, which she did wonderingly. When I told her to get the stepladder, and be quick about it, and not to unnecessarily advertise it, she brought the ladder and I climbed out.

Then, woman-like, she wanted to know what I was digging that hole for, and why I was down there. I was trying to improvise a lie about water pipes to the barn, when she caught sight of the wheelbarrow with its bagging-covered form, and still laboring under the fatal curiosity for which woman is famous, lifted up the cloth, let out a loud shriek, and fled to the house. Later I told her the circumstances and explained my secrecy on the plea, a very plausible if specious one, that I did not want her to know about it until long afterwards. This was, as a fact, true, but the reasons were, I am sure, not what she thought.

At all events, I buried poor Pyg., first having filled in the trench until his resting-place was dry and soft, and covered him with clean bagging. And there he lies to-day, a victim of his appetite and the plumb idiocy of his owner.

Verily at this rate my farming venture will not be wholly successful from a financial standpoint. However, there are ups and downs in all business. It is not so much the financial loss that I regret as the loss of a friend with whom (*which*, perhaps, would be better) I was gradually getting on terms of intimacy. And I hate to realize, as I not infre-

quently have to do, what an unmitigated and extraordinary ass I am.

I have ordered a new pig, of the size, sex, and color of my martyred Pygmalion.

Monday, July 29, 191–. I am confronted by an unexpected and wholly unreasonable state of affairs. I find that a vacation is absolutely necessary to my physical, mental, and moral welfare. My wife said so. I rose to a point of order, got the floor, and denied it with hoarse invective. I asserted that I eat three square meals a day. She admitted it, but said I eat too heartily and altogether too fast and that my flesh is not healthy. I came back with the statement that possibly, when judged from the standpoint of roast, boiled, fried, fricasseed, braized, potted, or corned, it might not be exactly tempting or especially appetizing, but I was sure it would have a very sustaining quality.

She claimed that I am quick-tempered and nervous and never want to sit still. That I am temperamentally twisted. I retorted that I have so much to do and so little time to do it that I can't sit still even if I wished to, but that I sleep nights as soundly as a hibernating woodchuck.

She said a vacation is a good thing for one. I said it surely is provided a person both needs it and wants it, but when a person neither needs it,

vants it, nor deserves it, to take it is like giving
p a good job to hold up a post or to hold down
curbing on the sidewalk.

We argued all the evening when I wanted to
pray the roosts on my henhouse with kerosene.

There are too many loafers in the world, any-
vay. I wish some way could be devised to pry
oafers away from posts. The idea of a vacation
vhen there is so much work to do!

Tuesday, July 30, 191–. But for the hose my farm
vould be pretty dry. As it is I cannot water the
awn, and my daily promenade in the rear of my
awn-mower has been called off. I am getting to
e a master hand at the scythe. It is seldom that
break a blade now, not more than once or twice
week. The cow gets all the grass and greens she
an eat. The hardware man speaks highly of me.

Wednesday, July 31, 191–. Had a light skirmish
vith my wife about the vacation. Some women
ave developed persistency to an obsession.
The absence of my clerk has given me much less
ime to do my farm work. When she comes back
ext Monday, there will be enough to do to put
he idea of a vacation entirely out of the question.

Thursday, August 1, 191–. To-day my daugh-
er Nathalie broached the vacation question.

Said I looked drawn and tired. I feel sure she was sicked onto me.

Friday, August 2, 191–. Still dry. The Water Company has restricted us to two hours per day for the use of the hose. Hang a soulless corporation!

Saturday, August 3, 191–. At breakfast this morning my wife spoke very disparagingly of my physical condition. She said I looked very much like her brother just before he was taken down with typhoid fever. I told her that I had been called almost everything in my day; that my name had been chalked up on fences coupled with every epithet that ingenuity could invent and malice prompt; that I had been caricatured in the public prints, and had been called unbeliever, cut-throat dog, and that my Jewish gaberdine had been spit upon, but that it has been reserved for the wife of my bosom to heap the most venomous and unjust calumny of all upon me; that it was bad enough to look like her brother when he was in the bloom of health; that I was hurt, but I had learned by years of repression to submit to almost anything; but that this was too much, too much.

Beyond saying that I would perhaps realize my condition when it was too late, she did not pur-

sue the subject farther, but poured herself a second cup of coffee.

Then Dick took up the thread of argument by telling me that I looked like hell; and that my ultimate destination would be the boneyard if I did n't switch off.

I replied that a fellow who was five feet eight inches tall and only weighed one hundred and eleven pounds had better not talk of the boneyard, and the young man applied himself to his bacon and eggs as if it were his sole interest in life.

Then Nathalie, who had just returned from a month's vacation at a New Hampshire lake, suggested that quite often a man of my age, working beyond his strength, was liable to a severe if not fatal shock, to which suggestion I replied rather pointedly that a man who had received in one day a bill for a load of grain and a bill for his angel daughter's summer suit and hat, as I had done the day before and lived, was shock proof.

She made no reply to this beyond an inarticulate gurgle as she hastily quaffed a bumper of milk.

It is by interposing this defence of raillery and light persiflage that I keep them in their trenches. However, I have a feeling in my bones that some day they will land me. How or when

I cannot say. But the odds are strongly against me. I wonder what their next move will be.

I am afraid I rather exceeded the hose limit to-day. I saw the superintendent of the Water Company drive by in his touring-car this morning with his family, and as there is no meter indulged myself a bit. Probably not over four or five hours extra. I wish it would rain.

Sunday, August 4, 191–. My clerk comes back to-morrow. It is my intention to shove all the office work possible on her and put in some great work on the farm myself. She has, I am very glad to note, come back in a rude state of health, and capable, I feel sure, of bearing any burdens not too unreasonable.

Now, if my family will kindly call off their interest in that infernal vacation of mine, I may be able to do something.

Monday, August 5, 191–. It has been threatening rain for a day or two, but I still keep the hose going to the limit and sometimes a bit beyond. My watch is not very accurate, I am afraid. My wife commenced again to-day on a new tack. She says she does n't see why we are the only people in the community that do not own an automobile. I explained that generally, except in the case of the criminally rich, an automobile went hand

in hand with a real estate mortgage, and that having gone to the mat for years in a rough and tumble with the homestead mortgage which I had finally killed in a struggle that had left me a care-worn, serious, wrinkled old man before my time, I never wanted to deliberately invite another of the breed to be in my midst, go to bed with me, rise when I rose, and sit at my table like a death's head.

To all of which she said "Humph!" and retired. "Humph" may mean almost anything. Still the way she pronounced it indicated only too plainly that she was not impressed by my discourse.

My pigs are really getting to be hogs now. My grain bills are very disquieting.

Tuesday, August 6, 191–. I proposed a home vacation to-day, in which I am to give my entire attention to my farm and garden. It did not make a hit. Indeed, both my daughter and my wife predicted that I would be sorry when I was dead. Never having been dead, of course, I cannot say. It will be tough enough to be dead without being sorry for it.

Wednesday, August 7, 191–. Sharp thunderstorm to-day followed by a heavy, pouring rain for several hours. Everything was thoroughly soaked,

and fairly steams to-night. My wife is always very sensitive to atmospheric disturbances and has gone to bed with a nervous chill.

Thursday, August 8, 191–. I never saw so rapid a change in the crops overnight. The lawns are a vivid emerald, the corn which had begun to shrivel up like a cheap cigar, is lush and green. It will be but a day or two before I shall be pushing my lawn-mower again. I am not especially keen about that lawn-mower. My wife is up to-day, but feeling far from well. Thinks a Ford Sedan would be about the thing. Now I can buy one, but I positively cannot afford the time for it. I know what it will mean. No more farming, no time to write.

Friday, August 9, 191–. Had a bright idea last night. Why not send my wife and daughter away to the mountains and seashore until the fall term of school. Then I can stay at home and keep the farm from reverting to the wild and untamed wilderness, the buildings from falling to pieces, and my thoroughbred stock from deteriorating to mere beasts of the field.

Proposed it at breakfast. It was promptly vetoed unless I promised to go with them. Women, irrespective of age, are most accursedly obstinate and stiff-necked.

Saturday, August 10, 191–. I broke off an ear of corn to-day and tried it. It was unformed as yet, but in a week or ten days some of it will be ready. Things are jumping ahead as in the first week of June. It seems sad to be personally galloping toward the grim and silent tomb, as my wife says I am, while all nature, as well as hens, cow, pigs, and sheep, is flourishing. It is strange that I, who am so seriously distempered, still work like a horse, eat like a hired man, and sleep like a business man under a prosy preacher.

Sunday, August 11, 191–. Unless I am mistaken my wife said something about a Winton Six to-day. It looks as if I may have to do something about that cussed vacation. I wonder why they won't let me alone?

Monday, August 12, 191–. Tried another tack to-day. Proposed that they write some near and dear friend to go on a vacation with them and let me stay home. The proposal was vetoed *nemine dissentiente*. I wonder if obstinacy in women is acquired or inherited or both? It is a deplorable trait and they have the presumption to claim that I am the one who is obstinate, and actually they talk as if they really thought so. It seems so absolutely ridiculous that I, who only wish to be let alone, and to be allowed to cultivate in

peace my little patch of land and to eat my own vegetables and leave the madding crowd to mad and be hanged to them, should be accused of obstinacy because I do not want to waste time at a mountain or seashore resort.

Tuesday, August 13, 191–. It rained to-day hard. I was unable to do any work in the garden, but cleaned and swept the barn pretty thoroughly and, with a raincoat and a pair of rubber boots as a protection, cut enough grass for the cow. It is rather good fun running a mower in the rain. The grass cuts easily and the wet makes the machine run noiselessly. Then when the grass is taken from the hood, it is sweet and fresh and clean and I think the cow relishes it all the more.

We needed rain very much, and the farmers have been quite a bit pessimistic over the crop outlook. Of course I have kept my hose working during the time allowed, which has done much toward keeping my plants fresh, but a day of rain will freshen things up more than a fortnight of hose watering. Of course I shall have to spray my potatoes again, but that is no great task. One has to be careful not to leave any of the poison where neither your ox, nor your ass, nor your cattle, nor the stranger within your gates may get at it and drink a bumper of it to your health.

I do not know the reason, but any domestic

animal of any considerable value will manage, by hook or by crook, to take advantage of any remissness on your part, and will promptly fill itself to the brim with various poisonous compounds, however nauseous, and will inevitably die of hideous and astounding abdominal distension, which will render prompt inhumation not only advisable, but absolutely necessary.

I have found that there is but little if any element of chance in it. One can predict in advance just what a certain animal will do. That is to say, if you have two cows, one an extremely valuable thoroughbred of any standard family, due to freshen the next week, and the other an old grade, giving at best scarcely enough milk to pay for one's time, to say nothing of her keep, and you carelessly leave a pail of Paris green mixture on the border of a fresh patch of green cabbages and with equal carelessness allow your two cows the freedom of the yard, the thoroughbred will drink the poison and die promptly, while the old grade cow will eat the cabbages and live. This result, while curious and inexplicable, never fails. It is, I suppose, analogous to the fact, which every railroad claim agent will vouch for, that none but thoroughbreds are ever killed by locomotives.

Of course under these circumstances a wise man never leaves poison exposed.

It was still raining to-night when I went to bed. The robins sang until nearly dark. They know how rain, driving on the grass and ground, will bring worms to the surface by thousands. Little Tommy Tucker singing for his supper has nothing on Sir Redbreast in a summer rain.

Wednesday, August 14, 191–. I am wondering what Dr. Osler would say if he had to follow me for a day. It is scarcely probable that he would at once recede from the position he has taken, but he would, I think, be less annoyingly cocksure. I feel that I have demonstrated beyond a peradventure that a man of sixty or more may, by a judicious alternation of physical and mental work, do as much and as good work as he could were he but thirty. The saying, "Old men for counsel, young men for war," sounds good, and is true as far as the counsel goes. But it should have stopped there. If by "war" is meant hard physical work the statement is misleading in the extreme.

I claim to have proved by my own experience that I am as good physically as when I was a youngster. Of course I do not do the things I did then — wrestle, box, ride, swim, play football, row. And the reason is that I no longer feel the same interest in those sports. I would rather milk, split wood, and farm for my exercise. I

claim that I would have been more tired at having to do as a youngster what I now do at any age when, as Osler says, I would better be dead than alive.

I have worked with my hands and arms and legs and back at least three hours every day since March, without in the least interfering with my office or court work or with my writing. Indeed, I am sure I have done better work in the office from the mental cobweb clearing of my outdoor work. And with the exception of one week of sciatica I have been at the top of my stride every minute. And yet Osler has the unmitigated nerve to say — well, what's the use? He is not worth considering. But I would like to have him follow me one day — that's all.

Thursday, August 15, 191–. I wish here and now to go on record as taking back, all and singular, without reservation, what I have said about Dr. Osler, and especially what I said yesterday. When a doddering old dodunk of sixty tries to do the work of a young man, and tries to convince himself that he is as good as he was when thirty years younger, he needs a lesson in humility and he generally gets it as I am getting it. If Osler were here I would personally apologize to him and do him honor. This morning I rose early feeling like a youth of twenty. I was wakened

by the song of a rose-breasted grosbeak which was enough to make a man feel young. Then I heard the watchman's rattle of a kingfisher making a short overland cut between Salt River below the lower dam and Fresh River by the park.

My cow gave more milk than usual, three hens had already laid, and really everything seemed coming my way. So after building the kitchen fire, milking my cow and feeding the rest of my pensioners I got down on my knees astride a row of late hatched beets to hand-weed them. I had been at work on hands and knees for a short time when a bowstring in my back twanged sharply. I instantly responded with a loud yell and fell prostrate on my face. Indeed, my yell was so prompt and so loud that it completely drowned out the twang of the bowstring. I am very sorry for that because if I could have found out the exact tone of the string I could at once have determined whether I was sharp or flat, tuned to high, low, or medium pitch. And having got the note and pitch, science could have readily computed my vibrations. It would be extremely gratifying as well as instructive to know just what one's vibrations are: how many in a given period. And then I should have been able to determine whether or not I had any overtones. While it may not be of superlative importance to know whether

one has overtones or not, it would be interesting to know.

Of course, if there were overtones I probably stopped them by my prompt response of my hands to my injured back, in the same way that an Ethiopian gentleman stops the vibrations of his banjo strings by spreading his hands over them.

After I fell on my face I was quite content to lie there a moment while I regained part of the breath that I had wasted in that soul-racking yell. After regaining my breath I tried to get up and found that I could n't without apparently breaking in two. So I lay there awhile thinking over what the next move should be. It was perfectly evident that I could n't lie there all the rest of the day, let alone the rest of the summer.

After a while I concluded that my abdominal muscles were intact even if my back was broken, and with much malediction I slowly rolled over on my back, and from this position, using my elbows vigorously and my abdominal muscles rather gingerly, I managed to get up.

> "Then rested he by the Tum Tum tree
> And [stood] sat awhile in thought."

After I had rested a bit I slowly and with many groans and grunts got onto my legs, but in a much warped and twisted condition, and

slowly crawled into the house and sent for the doctor.

On his arrival he told me that I was not paralyzed nor was my back broken, but that I had dropped a stitch in my back. It was a relief to be told in language that I could understand. Heaven only knows what language a veterinarian would have used to describe my ailment. I am confident that a veterinarian would have scared me to death. How fortunate it is that afflicted animals cannot understand what a veterinarian says about them.

Then the doctor laid me on my face on the bed, after removing my shirt produced an immense spool of adhesive plaster and began to weave curious designs in plaster on my prostrate figure. I don't know how much he used, but I am sure if I were unwound at this minute I would produce several hundred yards of flesh-colored ribbon. Indeed, when he got through I resembled a cocoon spun by the lowly grub that later bursts into the gorgeous butterfly.

I felt so rigid that I could not help thinking of Mr. Bagnet, the ex-artilleryman in Dickens's "Bleak House," who had "whiskers like the fibres of a cocoanut," and "an unbending, unyielding, brass-bound air, as if he were himself the bassoon of the human orchestra."

But to my delight and surprise I found that I

ould stand upright, walk, and, apart from feel-
ng as stiff above my waist as a graven image, am
airly capable. I have what is known as the mili-
ary carriage. But I cannot help thinking of what
time I shall have later when I unwind from my
hrinking hide several hundred yards of adhesive
laster which by that time will have become a
omponent part of me.

Would it not have been better to have laid in
ed until that infernal bowstring or stitch was
aken up, rather than to have made of myself
rigid and unyielding statue of spruce gum? I
ave doubts.

At all events I did my office work to-day,
nd to-night did my barn work without great
difficulty, so I am several degrees better than
dead.

Friday, August 16, 191–. I am not the man I was
nce. I am not the man I was yesterday before
I tried to weed those infernal beets. I have a
"misery in my back." I do not believe I could
count the number of elderly people in the coun-
try for whom I have drawn deeds or wills or
leases, or advised at their houses, who have had
a "misery in their backs."

The expression always amused me very much.
I cannot explain why. Perhaps it was the lugu-
brious faces they drew when recounting this

symptom; perhaps the tone of their voices was amusing.

At all events, I am not a bit amused now. I know what a misery in one's back is. No other words are as expressive to describe it. I have a misery in my back and I can pull as hideous a face and let out as loud a yell as any one of the afflicted, and when it comes to heartfelt and sincere language, why —!

> "How miserable is man when the foot of the Conqueror is on his neck."

The members of my family one and all have taken advantage of my semi-helpless condition, have suborned the doctor, and have ridden me with whip, spur, and spade bit all over the premises on the question of vacation. I had to give in. How long can you expect a man who has a misery in his back to stand out against such odds? So I have agreed to go with my family on a vacation to a certain lake resort.

Dingbust all such resorts to everlasting dingbustitude!

I milked to-day, perhaps for the last time, for I am positive that under the unskilful milking of the man who has charge of the adjoining estate my cow will be as dry as a prohibition pamphlet by the time I get home. So will the garden. Confound vacations, anyway!

Saturday, September 14, 191–. Back to the farm. I feel as if I had been away a year. I have swum and paddled and fished and climbed mountains, and have been smoke-dried by campfire smoke, and have taken part in handicap competitive athletics of every kind and nature, and have vowed eternal friendship to the most delightful people in the world who have in their turn vowed the same, and who will forget my name before Christmas as I will have forgotten their faces.

And I am as tanned and healthy as my wife and daughter, and we have had a glorious time and the vacation was after all a good thing for every one.

But the best of it is the coming home again. I really do not know which seems more delightful, the battered old rolltop in the window or the home place. I am glad that there will be no vacations before next year at about this time.

I am sure the animals knew me and appreciated my return. My hogs have grown beyond all calculations, my sheep looks like a new league ball on four legs, and my cow is as smooth and shiny as a new silk skirt.

And when I came to look into affairs at the office I find that as far as efficiency is concerned the office appears to have been run better without me than with me. Really I do not make very much of a dent in the world's affairs. Anyway, I am

glad I am back. Now I must get down to work. I have loafed long enough. No well man has a right to loaf after he is sixty years of age.

Sunday, September 15, 191–. It seemed good to milk again, to clean out the stall and the pigpen and to bed down; to pluck corn and pull beets and cabbages and to eat them, particularly the corn. As soon as the corn is gathered I cut down the green stalks for the cow, the sheep, and the pigs. It is a perpetual thanksgiving day for them.

A good many people are sick with the prevailing distemper and the schools are not to open for a week or two.

Monday, September 16, 191–. Really things have changed very much for the better since I was a boy — yes, since I became a man. Every day brings its surprises. As a college man I am supposed to be fairly well educated, and as a member of a liberal profession I am supposed to have supplemented that education by the hard mental work necessary to enable one to pass the bar examinations.

And yet no single soul but myself knows full well how little I know. I was a bit cocky, perhaps, when, just out of college, I went into a country law office and began to meet all sorts of people for my employer in a business way. I was

still cocky, but less so when I returned with my certificate of admission to an office of my own, and began to meet all sorts and classes of people desiring advice.

I then found out, not wholly to my surprise, how little I knew, but greatly to my surprise, how much they knew, and particularly was I surprised at the amount of knowledge, legal, political, historical, and common-sensical the average farmer had. It did me good, and taught me that I could learn something from every one who came to my office.

I am still learning. Indeed, just at present I am taking a sort of pan-educational course. It is never too late to learn. A bit more difficult, perhaps, as one approaches the sere and yellow, but not too late.

In my early professional life correctly dressed gentlemen of insinuating manners persuaded me to purchase bushels of reference books: Encyclopædias that I could not understand; "Familiar Quotations" that somebody borrowed and still covertly cherishes; Books of Synonyms that I loaned for a week only to a man whose identity I have forgotten and who still has it after thirty years; and other expensive and practically useless tomes on an instalment plan that proved a crushing financial burden for many and weary years.

As soon as they were paid for I sold the unborrowed ones or exchanged them for articles more to my taste if not to my needs. But while they were there they made a brave show on my office shelves and were seldom, if ever, disturbed.

Some distinguished ancient took up the study of Greek at a very advanced age. This fact was duly and daily impressed upon me by the Greek Professor in the Academy, when I was studying that defunct and bemummied language.

It made a great impression on me at the time, but not precisely what the Professor desired. I was convinced that the ancient was clearly insane or one of those perverted natures that know no shame. But here am I, already an ancient, daily receiving instruction in spelling, pronunciation, grammar, mathematics plain and ornamental, and other branches. It is a weird experience.

It came about in this way: My sole clerk became sick, distempered and ill, and withdrew, temporarily, I hope, for a somewhat uninteresting vacation in bed. The prevailing epidemic of influenza caused a postponement of the opening of the schools, and I am fortunate, doubly fortunate, in securing the services of one of the marooned teachers to take the place of my afflicted clerk until the delayed opening of the schools. That she is thoroughly educated and scholarly

up-to-date I am convinced beyond peradventure. And although she is the daughter of a farmer, and used to the good things of life, yet am I surprised at her erudition. And I am equally convinced that I am still an "also ran" in the mere rudiments of education.

As a country lawyer I have all sorts of people in my office. There is a pronounced lack of dignity in the transaction of business and an apparent lack of system. This is not wholly as true as it seems, for with perseverance, a pitchfork, the spur of necessity, a search warrant, and a coal sifter I can usually find any paper needed in the course of a few hours or of a day or two.

I have always tried to adapt myself to my clients. If an Englishman comes in, whom I wish to retain as my client or to put in good humor, I manage during the interview to let him know that I am a half Englishman by birth, and he spills aspirates all over me.

If a Frenchman, I try him with

"Un octogenaire plantait
Passe encore de batir
Mais planter à cet age."

If he does not rise at this bait, I am sure to land him by one of Drummond's or of William McLennon's "The Old France and the New."

If an Irishman I sedulously conceal the English half of me and quote:

"Paddy O'Shane has no shoes to his fa-a-te,
Sorra a shoe, divil a shoe,
And his houghs they look rid
As he thramps on the sthra-ate,
Och, wirrahoo!"

If a German I either throw him bodily through the door or assassinate him and conceal his body under the papers on my desk. In this unostentatious way do I endeavor to hold my clients. I trust it may not be deemed unethical. We lawyers may not advertise nor may we solicit. We may at least make desirable clients welcome.

But to return to the schoolma'am clerk, the farmer's daughter.

My early experience with the country schoolma'am of the middle and late sixties had left the ineradicable impression of an angular spinster with the power of concentrating the basilisk glare of red-hot augers through her steel-bowed spectacles, who, when she undertook a verbal dressing down, successfully imitated a volcano belching forth fire, smoke, ashes, and lava.

She invariably wore her hair in a knob on the top of her head: a knob so tightly wound that her eyeballs resembled those of an owl, the likeness being occasionally made more realistic by the iron grip of her claws on the collar of my roundabout, in my hair, or on my ear.

She also wielded a flexible rattan that stung like a yellow-bellied hornet, and wore on the

second finger of her knuckled hand an iron thimble with which she frequently beat tattoos and rataplans, or played brilliant tympani fantasias on my shrinking skull until its emptiness rang like an old tin kettle.

And so I experience a sort of reminiscent dread, when I engaged, after that method known in my boyhood as "unsight and unseen," a young person and a schoolma'am at that. I was, of course, aware that in the half-century that had elapsed since I was a small schoolboy, there had been a marked and very welcome change in the species. Indeed, I had seen many specimens of late years that had made me

> "Wish that I was young again,
> I'd lead a different life";

and when an exceedingly attractive young lady appeared and announced that if I pleased she was the new clerk, I could not believe that I was standing in the presence of an unalloyed New England schoolma'am.

I indicated where she might hang her coat and hat, gave her a seat at the clerk's table and some papers to arrange alphabetically, and retired in good order, convinced that she was not a schoolma'am after all.

Tuesday, September 17, 191–. Was rather in a hurry this morning. I wanted to see if my school-

ma'am clerk, who is not a schoolma'am, I feel sure, was on time. One thing I am particular about. I want my clerk to be on time. There may be nothing for her to do. If so she may sit in the window and look out over the square. It is worth looking at, I assure you. There is always a row of pigeons or sparrows on the rim of the fountain struggling for a chance to drink or bathe. There are familiar old horses, attached to delivery wagons, that stroll unattended to the fountain for a drink, and pay absolutely no attention to the motors that roar and honk and rattle by.

And there are always interesting people in the square, and loafers holding up posts and conferring weightily on questions of national importance, and at certain regular periods the mill blows off steam and the pigeons all rise in terror, and you wonder if you can hold your breath as long as the steam blows and find you cannot, and when the roar stops the square seems silent by contrast.

And there are always two or three crows flying in from the marshes, and making their slow progress high over the tall elms and far above the church spire and the Goddess of Justice on the town hall.

So a person can do no better, if he has a few minutes at his disposal, than to sit in my window and look out over the square.

At precisely five minutes before the hour my new clerk entered, bade me a business "Good-morning," removed her hat and coat and was at her table before the stroke of nine. Her punctuality was refreshing, but it savored quite a little of the schoolma'am. But yet she did n't look like one.

My conviction was somewhat shaken, when, in making a suggestion, she said, "Don't you," in that markedly grunting tone that indicates a severe attack of laryngitis, or inflamed and congested tonsils, a method of late years affected by schoolma'ams and other highly educated people, something like this: "Don't gnu?"

A half-hour later, when the papers I had given her were sorted, neatly labelled, and I asked her to copy them in longhand, and offered to read them to her to insure expedition, her answer upset my convictions completely, for she said pleasantly and without the slightest attempt at sarcasm: "Thank you, no. You need not waste valuable time, for I can duplicate the slips with greater accuracy and celerity by visualization as a medium of coördination, than by auditory images."

I was a little taken aback by this broadside of erudition, but not wishing to be completely nonplussed I at once replied in the vernacular of the trolley conductor and the fight fan:

"I don't plumb savvy, lady, what them is, but from now on my money is on you from the call of time to the tap of the gong."

I do not think she fully comprehended me, but after looking at me very composedly and rather frigidly through her *pince-nez* glasses, she turned to her task and began to write rapidly and very copper-platedly, undoubtedly using "visualization as a medium of coördination," while I conducted a masterly retreat to my private office.

Is that, on the whole, the proper way to address one's employer on so very short a notice? It does not seem so to me, but perhaps I am wrong. At all events, I feel sure that she will see that no one in my absence will take any liberties with the office property.

I feel little if any doubt that she is a schoolma'am, and I think that with care and attention I may be able to brush up quite a bit in the rudiments of spelling, grammar, and the arrangement of sentences, as well as history, mathematics, and doubtless of law, in all of which branches I am weak.

Wednesday, September 18, 191–. I gave away to-day five dozen ears of golden bantam corn, six cabbages, a bushel or more of beets, cucumbers, beans, and a quart of cream, besides cutting a lot of truck for my cow and pigs. This is

one of the delights of farming. Counting the exercise and pleasure as equal to the expense and the value of your time, your produce costs you nothing. Then your friends are so pleased with the fresh vegetables that you feel just so much ahead and that your farming has paid you well.

I took so long to pick my gift vegetables, to wash them with the garden hose, and to pack them and take them round to my friends, that I was late at the office.

My little schoolma'am was on deck and anxious for work. So as soon as I told her what to do I went to my private office to work on a brief that required concentration, when I heard rapid and aggressive footsteps bounding up the stairs. I recognized them as the footsteps of one of those office pests who breeze into one's office making all the noise he can, slaps you on the back, is fresh with your clerk, calls you "Old Man," puts his feet on your office table, lights a cigarette that smells like a fire in a livery stable when several horses have been burned, and tells a story that is an offence equally to good taste and to decency.

I waited and chuckled. I knew something would happen. Something did. There were rapid steps through the hall, the rattle of the knob, and the fluff-fluff of the window curtains as the door flew open, and his great voice boomed out.

"Hullo, little sister, is old man Pooh Bah in?"

There was a long and chilling pause during which I could mentally visualize if not actually see her bespectacled glance burning deep into his abashed vitals. Then she spoke coldly, and with a ring of very schoolma'amish decision in her voice.

"Judge Shute is in his private office. If it be possible for you to knock on his door without breaking the panels, he may be willing to see you."

In a moment a subdued and very uncertain tap sounded, and a very awed and impressed man tiptoed into my office, closed the door softly, and whispered, "Gosh! Where did you pick up the Ice-Cold Soda Fountain?"

For the first time in history our interview was short, businesslike, and satisfactory, and when he left he asked permission to go out by the other door so as not to be compelled to face her glittering spectacles again. As he left the room he turned and in a hoarse whisper said:

"Is the freezer permanent?"

"I trust so," I answered.

"Do you expect to have any business?" he whispered.

"I certainly do," I replied, "but not your kind."

Really there are points about this young lady

that are most commendable. This pest was reduced to his least common denominator as quickly as I had ever seen it done, and I had good-naturedly suffered from this infliction for years.

I do not dare to think how much I might have saved from the rapacious maws of book agents, typewriter-supply men, rubber-stamp peddlers, magazine-subscription young ladies; unknown youth struggling to work their way through college, who never send the magazines you subscribe for; sad-faced women of advanced years seeking aid for a poor woman in Iowa whose home had been blown away in a tornado; colored ladies soliciting funds for the University of Ethiopia; local firemen offering tickets for competitive squirts; I.O.O.F. solicitors conducting lotteries for a three days' fair; ladies with spectacles demanding subscriptions for the new church organ or for a carpet for the small vestry; and the thousand and one Jabberwocks of business, that with eyes of flame come whiffling through the Tulgey Wood with loud and joyful burble and take toll of my none too ample income.

Had this competent and resolute young woman, or one like her, drifted into my orbit years ago, I really do not know what might have happened. I know what certainly would have happened. I would have been spared much waste

of time and money and unlimited annoyance, and would have won the enviable reputation of being a man independent of thought and action, who did n't allow himself to be bothered by cheeky mendicants, instead of having the reputation of being a sort of good-natured but weak old cuss who cannot say no.

Thursday, September 19, 191–. If green corn, new beets, butterbeans, little purple-topped turnips were always accessible in a fresh state I should no longer point the finger of scorn at the vegetarian. But none the less I should not willingly employ him to do hard work. I suppose, should this statement be read by a vegetarian, straightway the whole tribe of vegetarians would rise, mightily refreshed by their hearty and invigorating meal of hickory nuts, lettuce, and distilled soft water, and denounce me as a coarse and unregenerate meat-eater, a killer of helpless animals, a fattener on the flesh of innocents.

All the same I take so kindly to a broiled chicken or roast fowl, to a juicy steak or chop, a rare or medium roast, a succulent spareribs, a crisp ham and eggs, a brace of sputtering sausages, that when I have satisfied the demands of a naturally healthy appetite, there is little left.

"If this be treason make the most of it."

Read if you will, Dickens's description of a

stew that the landlord of the Jolly Sandboys prepared for the itinerant showmen of various kinds:

"Mr. Codlin drew his sleeve across his lips, and said in a murmuring voice, 'What is it?'

"'It's a stew of tripe,' said the landlord, smacking his lips, 'and cow-heel,' smacking them again, 'and bacon,' smacking them once more, 'and steak,' smacking them for the fourth time, 'and peas, cauliflowers, new potatoes and sparrow-grass, all worked up together in one delicious gravy.'

"Having come to this climax, he smacked his lips a great many times, and taking a long, hearty sniff of the fragrance that was hovering about, put on the cover again with the air of one whose toils on earth were over."

Friday, September 20, 191–. By means of the schoolma'am, who is a glutton for office work, I managed to do quite a lot of work on the farm. I dug a half-dozen bushels of potatoes, bagged them and wheelbarrowed them to the cellar. I picked a peck or so of shell beans; that is to say, there was a peck of the beans after the removal of about a bushel of pods. This took time and was the acid test of my thumbnails. Then I picked some late cucumbers and string beans, a bushel or so, all of which my wife is canning, or

bottling, or glassing, or embalming, or putting down, whatever may be the proper term.

Saturday, September 21, 191–. If I could have a real truck farm I believe I could raise milk with practically no expense. My cow eats greens of all kinds from morning until night and her sides stick out as tight as a drum. Got caught at the office this afternoon. Dick was away and I could n't pass the matter over to him.

Sunday, September 22, 191–. When I was a boy and was not allowed to work on Sunday, and was compelled by stern parental command to go to church and Sunday School except on stormy days, it was my infernal luck to experience a regular procession of fair Sundays extending through the entire year.

Now I am a man, and able to do about as I wish on the Sabbath — and I generally wish to work on my farm, my barn, my garden, or my woodpile, — an unbroken succession of rainy Sundays is my lot. It rained to-day.

Monday, September 23, 191–. Still raining. I decided to do an extraordinary amount of work in the office to-day with the aid and coöperation of my schoolma'am clerk. To this effect I took the result of a couple of hours' hard work on some

promissory notes into her office and asked her if she would verify the figures, and told her to take her time, as the results were important.

She promptly laid aside her pen, glanced at my work, and asked me whether I used the Amalfian, Sempronian, or Lycinian method, and when I told her I used the method of one Colburn and one Greenleaf in their standard works on the subject, she replied, all the while figuring with astounding rapidity, that she ordinarily attained greater accuracy by the use of Suffield's method of Synthetic Division.

She also asked me if I had read Jeremy Bentham's Letters on Usury written in 1787, and when I was forced to admit that I had not, went on to say that Locke, Hume, and Adam Smith had entertained views mainly in accordance with those of Bentham, and that the Sempronian Law extended a uniform legislation on the subject.

I was exceedingly gratified to hear this, and spoke of how pleased Sempronius must have been to have received the commendation of such men as Locke and Hume and Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham.

She said that, inasmuch as quite a number of centuries had elapsed between the death of Sempronius and the birth of the four other gentlemen, he had missed that gratification unless he had been present in a somewhat nebulous state.

Then before the hot blush of mortification had retired below my collar, she confirmed my figures, having performed in ten minutes and with perfect ease that which I had toiled at painfully and profanely a full two hours, multiplying and dividing and adding and subtracting, and carrying figures to the next column, and borrowing one, and moving decimal points from place to place and dad-blaming the dingblasted luck in losing my interest tables.

I was amazed. Interest simple, compound, annual, and even the New Hampshire rule, lost their terrors. While I could not hope to comprehend her method, I could at least hunt up all the promissory notes entrusted to me and have them scientifically brought to date.

I am wondering if she is an isolated specimen, or have modern educational methods developed a select species?

I am inclined to the latter belief and I rejoice therein, thereat, and there-on-account-of. I have learned of her something of the grammatical distinctions between "may" and "can," "will" and "shall." I have learned some of the rules governing the use of "a" and "i" in words derived from the Latin. I have learned the correct spelling of "comparative" and "comparison" without confounding them.

I can say "are n't" fully half the time, and am

trying hard and faithfully to discard the "ain't" of the masses. But I balk on "nyether." There is too strong a local prejudice against its use. But in other respects my mind is open. Oh, yes, I am learning! But alas! school opens next week, and as I cannot pay the immense salaries lavished by our municipality upon our schoolma'ams, my course will, I fear, cease rather abruptly. And she is a farmer's daughter!

Tuesday, September 24, 191–. A pleasant day with everything too wet to work out. I find that regular milking for several months has greatly strengthened my wrists. When I was a boy at school there were a number of boys from the farm in the neighboring towns. There was a marked difference between the farm boy and the town boy. The farm boys worked harder in school and generally took all the prizes. They could not throw stones as well as the town boys, nor were they as good baseball players. But they were far better football players, and when it came to games that required strength they were easily the superiors of the town boy.

I remember very distinctly how strong they were in their arms and what a grip they had.

Wednesday, September 25, 191–. Dug three bushels of potatoes to-day. All in good shape.

Thursday, September 26, 191–. As the days begin to be crisp with the fall weather I wish I had a saddle horse. I rode for many years until the automobile made riding and driving a task rather than a pleasure. There is little pleasure or exhilaration in going from place to place mainly in the gutter to avoid being squashed flat by truck, touring-car, or runabout.

Friday, September 27, 191–. I forgot all about the kingbirds until to-day. They must have been gone nearly a month. They generally disappear about September 1 in this locality, and as far as I have been able to judge they serve no notice of departure on us by flocking or flying high. They make no change in their habits. August 31 they are at their posts, making things lively for passing birds, whatever their size, and simply gorging the flies, bugs, moths, and other insects, and acting as if they meant to stay until Christmas. September 1 they have disappeared and no man has seen them depart.

Saturday, September 28, 191–. The tiny little chipper birds have been very prolific this summer. There are flocks of them and of the goldfinch around the house and on the lawns. The robins are flying high and screaming in the tall elms, but it means little, for they will be here for six

weeks at least. It is mainly the full-grown young birds. The old birds are ragged and keep closer to the ground until their new feathers are grown.

Sunday, September 29, 191–. A kingfisher flew over the yard this morning. They are irregular in their migration schedule. A few years ago a kingfisher spent the entire winter around the raceway of the cotton mill, across the river from my rear office. The water there is always open all winter and warmed from passing through or under the mill. I have seen him dozens of times dive into the water and bring out a fish in midwinter. I could not find out where he spent the nights. Possibly in the coal sheds or in the raceway tunnel. This is probably not an isolated case, but the first and only instance of the kind I have observed or heard of. The leaves are brilliant and are beginning to fall. Every frost will bring them down in armies.

Monday, September 30, 191–. My schoolma'am clerk left on Saturday. She was thoroughly efficient to the last minute and I am *désolé* at losing her. Bless you, my slim little, trim little, prim little schoolma'am! If you marry — and I feel sure you will — choose some clean, honest, able young man who knows but little about the Amalfian or Sempronian method or Suffield's Syn-

thetic Division, and may you have manly sons and beautiful daughters to rise up and call you blessed, and not adding machines that go with a crank.

Tuesday, October 1, 191–. The delightful weather is affecting my cow. When I lead her out to her tether in the morning she prances in a circle around me, shaking her head, taking short jumps, and threatening me with her horns, and occasionally bolting and dragging me at terrific speed down the yard. Sometimes she presumes upon our acquaintance and I have to give her a rap over the nose with the end of the rope, at which she blinks and retires in manifest surprise.

Wednesday, October 2, 191–. Both Dick and I are very busy at the office, but I manage to do my barn work and something every day on the place. Although so early in October it is chilly. But the robins, and the bluebirds, the chippies, the goldfinches, and other friends are still with us, and the flocks of grackles are becoming longer and longer as they fly over the farm mornings and evenings.

Thursday, October 3, 191–. The flocks are becoming like the old-time pigeon flights.

Friday, October 4, 191–. October has managed a light frost just to say it is a bit more progressive in that line than September. I have ordered half a dozen cords of hickory wood according to habit. This I intend to have sawed by machine and to split it at my lesisure.

Speaking of habit, it is interesting, at my age, to observe the ease with which a habit is formed and the difficulty with which it is discarded. One of the most amusing instances is the following:

Several years ago I had the front steps of my house rebuilt. The carpenter to whom I entrusted the repairs must have been a man not having the fear of God in his heart, but in other respects was a most worthy artisan.

Acting on his passion for improvement, he built the top step a half-inch higher than it had been for years. I happened to be the first person to use the new steps after the paint was dry and the panels and boards that barred ingress had been removed.

It was "Springtime, Gentle Annie," and I had come from the office laden with the harbingers of spring. I had, I think, a child's outfit of hoe, rake, and shovel, a full-sized lawn rake, a paper package of seed corn, ditto of beans, ditto of peas, a pound of butter, a dozen of fresh eggs in a paper bag, a paper of tacks, a pound of freshly ground coffee. I may have omitted a few articles from the

enumeration such as a bunch of bananas, a gas stove, or a commode, but I am not sure.

I had lugged this collection from the stores to my house, a distance of over half a mile, and by the time I got there every tendon in my arms, back, and chest was strained to the breaking point, and my temper was similarly strained owing to the fact that the only way I had been able to keep my hat on in the fresh spring breeze was by stopping at various trees on the way and butting my head against them to force my then fashionable derby down to my ears.

Everything was slipping, and to avoid disaster I bounded up the steps, caught my toe on the extra half-inch of step, shot my head and most of my hardware and the lurid contents of a dozen eggs through the screen door, and scattered peas, beans, and seed corn over the entire neighborhood.

I was passing suitable comments on the situation when my wife appeared and asked if I had fallen, whereupon my comments became almost sublime in their picturesque intensity.

But for weeks afterwards we derived the greatest enjoyment from the ownership of these steps. Every one of my friends who was in the habit of running in of an evening invariably fell flat in negotiating that top step and scattered various articles over the piazza.

I do not remember having a more enjoyable spring and summer. Pleasant evenings we would hurry through our various tasks and take our seats on the piazza and wait like spiders in a web.

A fat woman from the country would drive up, tie her horse to a valuable blue birch or smoke bush, then puffingly ascend the steps with a ten-quart pail of blueberries or raspberries, fall prostrate and spill quarts of berries over us, which, after she had retired with loud lamentations, we would collect and devour, without money and without price.

Then a musical neighbor would lightly run up the steps with her arms full of classical duets for the piano, which she wished to play with my wife, and would trip and skitter all over the piazza and scatter "Gems from Stephen Foster," and "Excerpts from Mendelssohn's 'Midsummer Night's Dream,'" and "Transcriptions from Beethoven's 'Moonlight Sonata,'" "Last Hopes" of Gottschalk, and "Rides of the Valkyries" over the entire neighborhood.

Again, a very spruce and up-to-date youth, with the superb agility of the chamois and of youth, would lightly leap up the steps, bearing a sheaf of roses that exactly measured his credit at the greenhouse, only to fall resoundingly, to rise painfully, and in his mortification to sputter

a word or a sentiment that he would have given worlds to recall.

It was noticeable that no stranger had any trouble. Our friends and those coming frequently were the ones that fell. I felt bereaved and deprived of my just rights when I had the additional half-inch of step cut down.

Another habit that in its dreadful effect puts it in the same class with the drink habit, the drug habit, and that sort of malignant gossip known as "head-hunting," is the habit of throwing rugs out of the window without the constant presence of an official announcer.

I maintain that there should be a law enacted that would compel every person afflicted with the out-of-the-window-rug-throwing-habit, under the heaviest penalties, to maintain an announcer whose duties are to shout, "Look out for your heads, rugs coming," just as a mounted Oriental in gorgeous robes of state rides furiously ahead of circus processions shouting:

"Look out for your horses,
The Elephants are coming!"

I hate to mention it, and hate more to acknowledge it, but there is a member of my household addicted to this habit of rug marksmanship.

There is, to be sure, an element of humor in bringing a strong man and several quarts of milk to his knees and to temporary oblivion beneath

the dusty folds of a heavy rug flying from a two-story window. But after he has clawed and crawled his way out, preceded by muffled but perfectly recognizable profanity, and you have led him to the sink and have washed the dust out of his eyes and ears, and have given him a drink and a cigar, and have ordered three quarts of milk a day instead of one (this was before I bought my cow), to soothe him, and have promised him that you will see that it never occurs again, you feel that you got out of it easier than some one deserved.

It was a bit different with the Italian fruit dealer. I felt obliged to settle with him. He declined the drink "per Bacco"; he refused the cigar, "carrambissimo!" He refused to consider the purchase of a whole bunch of bananas, "Chr-r-r-r-isto!" I decline to say what it cost me. I thought at the time he was hard. I thought so up to yesterday. I do not think so now. Had I been in his place I certainly should not have settled for twice the amount. At least that is the way I feel about it now.

You see I was leading my cow through my yard peacefully, quietly, and with no guile in my heart. I was several feet ahead, she behind. In my hand firmly clasped was a strong rope attached to the heavy leather headstall which she wore. Suddenly there was a snort behind me, a terrific yank of the halter. I was twitched violently

into the air and slat — literally slat — clear across the driveway. My heels fairly snapped in the air. When I groggily rose to my feet I confronted a cow with upraised ears and with wild eyes staring at a cloud of dust in the midst of which lay a voluminous and dustily variegated rug.

And so I say this habit is in the same class as the drink habit and the drug habit, and I look forward to the time when hospitals will be widely established for its cure and rigorous laws enacted for its prevention.

Saturday, October 5, 191–. Tried some of my celery to-day. It seemed extremely strong and flourishing on the tops, but although I had banked it well, it was neither crisp nor white. I have evidently not the wizard's touch, when it comes to celery.

Three cords of hickory and pitch-pine landed to-day. In spite of positive instructions given, the cartman piled it just where it completely blocked entrance to, and exit from, my barn. I had to throw it over and re-pile it in another place, and to-night I am dead tired, a mass of pitch and splinters, and feel like a hedgehog. I can at least rest to-morrow, as it is Sunday.

Sunday, October 6, 191–. Spent most of this sacred day in pulling splinters out of my hands and

other parts of me and letting out staccato howls. The first thing I shall do to-morrow is to buy me a pair of lumberman's leather-faced mittens. If I had had them last night I should have felt less like a family pincushion or a rough pine knot to-day. Were it not too late in the season I might expect a pine grosbeak to build a nest in me and raise a brood, or a woodpecker to begin to excavate a tunnel in me.

Monday, October 7, 191–. I bought the lumberman's mittens to-day. Also an axe with a rather short, curved handle. I am very particular about the hang of my axe, as a good woodsman should be. With a well-balanced axe and the right sort of wood, wood splitting can be made an art as well as a pleasure. I have often been asked why I did not play golf. I did take it up nearly twenty years ago and found that I could not afford the time or the strain on my lingual limitations.

So I gave it up before I became a hopeless fan. It was really a most delightful game, at once democratic and suited to all times of life, as is no other game under the sun. But if one thinks golf is the only game of skill let him try splitting wood, using a sharp axe with a rather short, curved handle, on a block two feet across and three feet high. It is really good fun and gives one ample opportunity to develop skill.

And as for the nineteenth hole, why, bless your soul, after one has worked an hour at the woodpile of a crisp, frosty morning, the breakfast of muffins, bacon, and coffee is, in my opinion, far superior to anything the nineteenth hole ever afforded or ever will afford.

And so I always welcome the annual return of the woodpile.

Tuesday, October 8, 191–. Am gradually putting my crops into storage. I am not especially keen about digging potatoes. It perilously approaches drudgery. There is a good deal of lifting and bending over, and there is nothing particularly stimulating about a bag or a wheelbarrow. I wonder if it is because I am not a good finisher? — that I do not carry through? I do not quite think so.

It is far more interesting to plant, for you do that with a very delightful feeling of expectation. And in hand-weeding or hoeing you see the results immediately in the trim appearance of your rows of vegetables or fruits.

To be sure, there is a satisfaction in seeing a cellar well filled with crops, but the lugging in and storing is plain, prosaic work. I much prefer splitting wood.

The machine came to-day and sawed up the three cords of wood.

Wednesday, October 9, 191–. I tried my new axe to-day. The doctor says I was very lucky to get off as I did, and that unless blood-poisoning sets in I will have but little trouble.

Thursday, October 10, 191–. A stout cane is all I need. But I have to be careful and not break the plaster cast. I feel like a Rogers Group.

Friday, October 11, 191–. My friend Angus, who has charge of the next estate, does the milking now. I am going to have the doctor put on a new plaster cast so I can bend my leg. Then I can sit down and milk. My hands and arms are all right.

Saturday, October 12, 191–. Evidently blood-poisoning has not set in and now I can milk again. The doctor says there is a special providence that watches over fools and drunken men. He might at least have coined something new, if he wanted to be jocose.

Sunday, October 13, 191–. It was crisp and cool to-night. I was feeling the need of exercise badly as I had had an especially trying day in the office. So I lighted two lanterns, stood them on the woodpile, and started in splitting. I enjoyed it very much and incidentally must replace the globe of one lantern. It was an excellent shot and

I am proud of it. My wife says it served me right for splitting wood on the Sabbath.

Monday, October 14, 191–. Finished my potato digging to-day. I have seventeen bushels of good, clean Early Rose and Irish Cobbler potatoes in a bin besides several bushels of small ones with which I shall feed and gradually ripen my pigs. Really they are hogs now and the next few weeks will make a great difference in their weight and general appearance. I am feeding corn meal now with milk and potatoes. I only hope their skins will stretch as fast as they grow. If not they will look like a chestnut burr after a hard frost, or like an overboiled potato.

They are certainly great animals and enjoy life, having attained the poet's philosophy to

> "*Carpe diem, quam minimum*
> *Credula postero.*"

Tuesday, October 15, 191–. Got another lantern globe to-night. I thought it was out of gunshot, or rather of splitshot, but I got it. It was a straight bull's-eye and it went into nine thousand fragments. It was a new globe on the same lantern. I must hereafter be more impartial. The other lantern may feel hurt.

I have decided that when I split wood I must have the entire yard to myself. It would be har-

I tried my new axe to-day

rowing in the extreme to have some injured person take my farm under an execution obtained in an action of tort for personal injuries.

Wednesday, October 16, 191–. Every now and then I see and hear a bird from the North which stayed a few days here last spring and then passed on. I cannot help wondering about the kingbirds. The only reason why the kingbirds disappear so suddenly is, I believe, that they seldom go farther North. Otherwise we should, I am sure, have a season of migrating kingbirds that would last some weeks.

That this is not the case I am convinced. The kingbirds that are here all summer, alighting on the same fence-posts, defending the same nests and roosting-places, chasing the same crows as they do day after day and week after week, disappear overnight and no others take their places. My leg is nearly well again.

Thursday, October 17, 191–. If one sits in the open any warm evening now, or cool evening, as for that, only the average person does not sit in the open on a cool evening, the high clear call of migrating birds may be heard, coming down from the sky, and sometimes, of a moonlight night, a row of dots passes rapidly across the yellow disk of the moon.

It gives one a curious feeling. Almost a desire to go South with them and to get rid of the winter's wet, cold, and dreariness. The doctor took off the cast to-day. I shall have a scar, but as the fashion of wearing trousers still persists, it will not add to or detract from my charms.

Friday, October 18, 191–. There is a nut tree in my yard. The nuts are small and scarcely worth gathering; at least we think so. It is fortunate they are small, for we are spared the necessity of early and rapid work to preserve our crop. A few years ago a law was passed by our Solons establishing a close season on gray squirrels for a period of years. As a result they are very numerous and not tame enough to be a nuisance and the way they work in gathering the nuts is refreshing in this day of short working hours.

They eat hundreds of the nuts; they carry away to their nests and holes thousands; they bury millions; and each spring with my trusty lawn-mower I cut down countless tiny hickory shoots and serve them to my stock.

Leg nearly well.

Saturday, October 19, 191–. One of the pleasures of October is raking and storing dry leaves for the winter. The farmer claims that leaves are cold and have no value as bedding. I do not find

them so. It all depends upon storing them when perfectly dry. And a dry leaf is drier than anything I know. Yes, even drier than a no-license town, because in the latter there may always be found some sort of an oasis.

It is a pleasure to see the delight of my pigs when I have filled their sleeping quarters two feet thick with dry leaves. Their little piggy eyes twinkle, then their tails take an extra twist, and they wiggle their bodies with delight and race around like children playing.

Then, when they are tired, they fairly cover themselves with leaves and snore most comfortably.

But the farmer says rye or oat straw is much better. Agreed. But rye or oat straw costs as much as hay, while leaves cost but the labor of getting them in, and that is really a pleasant labor. And when thoroughly mixed with stable manure they make the best of fertilizer.

And as for scratching material in which to throw grain for your fowl, there is nothing better, if changed often enough to prevent them from being powdered by constant scratching.

Sunday, October 20, 191–. Rainy to-day — a cold, shivery, wet rain; a rain that will strike through a rain coat and give you a coat of goose pimples of a quarter of an inch elevation; a rain that will

strike a chill through your new, shiny, dollar-and-a-half rubbers that will reach to your knees. I am glad it did not rain yesterday. That is one of my most profitable office days when farmers and working-men quit afternoons and drop in for a few dollars' worth of litigation of various kinds and nature. And a rain of this kind keeps them at home husking, picking over, and sorting potatoes and apples, oiling up their motors, or playing seven-up.

The subsidy of my farm comes direct from my office. No office, no farm.

Monday, October 21, 191–. Weather very unsettled. Built a fire in the furnace with wood to-day. The open season on furnaces is about due. I have been splitting wood every morning and evening. While I am gaining in skill as a splitter, I seem to have lost my somewhat uncanny marksmanship in bagging lantern globes. I did manage to send a stick whizzing through a window in the henhouse this morning. This cheered me up some. My skill is not wholly gone. I do not limp now.

Tuesday, October 22, 191–. A sunny day, but with a fierce wind roaring in the tree-tops. Lost my pail of milk this morning. One of the legs of my milking-stool broke and let me down suddenly flat on my back. The cow kicked and knocked

that pail fully a rod. Of course I had just about finished milking and the pail was half full.

Well, I was lucky not to be the pail. I should have been cherishing quite a dent in my midriff. Must get a new stool.

Wednesday, October 23, 191–. A day that beckons one into the open. Just the day to roam the woods, to ride horseback, to shoot partridges, to — to — yes, to split wood. I really enjoyed it to-day, although I made no bull's-eye.

Thursday, October 24, 191–. It was warm to-day. Unreasonably so. There was a sort of blue haze over the hills. The robins were singing as in spring, the blackbirds were busy on every cornfield, the squirrels were chasing each other through the bare branches, and the crows were making a great fuss in the grove which set the jays screaming. I could shut my eyes and really feel that it was May again. I sent for a ram to-day to mate my sheep. The owner told me he was kind if you kept your eye on him and were ready to get in the first lick. That no ram was reliable until hung up in a provision store. I do not expect any trouble. I shall face him and drink to him with my eyes. I have seen the startling effects of a rear attack. A venerable agriculturist spoke of the weather to-day as a "weather-breeder." I

have heard that expression many times. Just what it means I never exactly knew, but it has an ominous sound.

Friday, October 25, 191–. Alack! the time is rapidly approaching when I must part with my pigs. I don't like to think of it. I feel as I imagine a man must feel whose relative or intimate friend has been convicted of murder and sentenced to death.

Of course I could reprieve them and keep them for years, but I should in time be ruined by progressive mortgaging to stand off the grain bills, and there must be no reprieve.

Saturday, October 26, 191–. The pigs are growing tremendously under the combined stimulus of boiled potatoes, milk, and corn meal. I have had some flattering offers for them. Shall not sell.

Sunday, October 27, 191–. I am working every legitimate and reasonable bluff to settle such cases as are likely to be marked for trial in the Superior Court this term. It is an axiom that there is more money in settling actions than in trying them. I am working that for all I am worth. There is so little time now after office hours and before dark to work.

Monday, October 28, 191–. The blackbirds are beginning to flock. I have seen a dozen or more flocks of fifty. Later on there will be big flocks, then armies.

Tuesday, October 29, 191–. I feel like an accessory before the fact every time I feed my pigs. I wonder if a butcher ever dies a quiet and peaceful death? I should have raised mules instead of pigs.

Wednesday, October 30, 191–. If I were a psychologist, I might perhaps be able to explain why it is that the fall chatter of a flock of blackbirds or grackles does not remind one of spring, while the fall warble of a bluebird gives one the same thrill that it did in the early spring.

Thursday, October 31, 191–. Pulled my cabbages and stored them in the cellar farthest from the furnace. We have had a frost nearly every night lately, but no freeze as yet. Long ago I forgot to cover my tomatoes and of course the heaviest frost of the season came that night. They looked thoroughly discouraged in the morning. They are very squashy now. Indeed, I do not believe one would hold together for a good shot at a fat man. I would like to try once for old acquaintance' sake.

Friday, November 1, 191–. In Portsmouth to-day at court. Did n't want to be there, but had to. Could n't get back until 6.20, and it was too dark for any work except barn work with a lantern. I did not finish the case and may not get through to-morrow. I expect to be taken for a ghost and to be shot at some night as I travel round with old sheets, covering squashes and perishable vegetables.

Saturday, November 2, 191–. I finished the case to-day at four o'clock in the afternoon. Jury out about an hour. In some inscrutable way they decided my way. This is a legal set-off to the enforced neglect of my farm for several days. It is such a relief not to be obliged to say to a disappointed client, "Well, I did my best for you, old man, but the evidence was too strong for us."

I wonder how many times I have said that in the past twenty-five years.

There is a long list of cases before another one of mine will be reached. Now for the farm.

Sunday, November 3, 191–. My wife has been repining loudly and frequently over my unaccountable refusal to have the front hall repapered according to a promise she claims I made. If she could really appreciate, as I do, the fact that I have been accumulating a most appalling pile

of unreceipted gristmill bills, I think she would see the impossibility of fulfilling a promise, which I firmly deny having made, with these bills staring me coldly in the face.

Instead of looking at the matter in the proper and wifely manner she discovers that the ceilings of three rooms must be whitened and the woodwork painted, and that the overhead plastering of the dining-room is cracked in four places, and that the "condition of the house is a burning shame, so there!"

However, with great tact I managed to steer the conversation toward the proper distribution of the pigs when reduced to portable fragments by skilled dissection.

I have rather failed in distributing my farm and garden produce among my friends this past summer, as my cow, my sheep, and my pigs have practically consumed almost all that we have not used on the home table. The sole *amende honorable* is to distribute among our friends the component parts of a hog. I have two hogs. One will surely carry us through a long and hard winter. The other is to be given away. We decided after mature deliberation that the S.'s shall have one ham, the Y.'s another; the B.'s one shoulder, the L.'s the other; a pail of real lard shall gladden and lubricate the household of M.; a spareribb shall make things pleasant for G.; a roast shall

help N. banish the gristly spectre of famine from his door; a few dozen of chops shall convince G. that God will protect the poor working-man; a chine and the chitlins — whatever they may be — shall furnish P. with increased momentum up the long hill; and so on.

We really had a most delightful time in planning our benefactions and went to bed feeling that we were, indeed, philanthropists.

Monday, November 4, 191–. Thanksgiving month. It looks bad for the pigs. I think I will economize this year. I have often heard that a good roast of pork, such as mine is, or will be when properly dismembered, is as good as chicken or turkey or goose. And as these birds are going to be extremely dear this year, and as I have the pigs, it really seems a duty to leave the turkey, the chicken, and the goose for some one else. To be sure, owing to the untimely demise of Pyg., which I have never ceased to mourn, my roast pork will be as expensive as the choicest turkey, but the point is, I have the roast and I am spared the necessity of buying turkey.

Tuesday, November 5, 191–. It is cold to-day and I have commenced anew with the furnace. I was told that the care of a furnace teaches one humility, like a hair shirt. It may be so with some, but I

n quite sure that in my own case the word "pro-nity" should be substituted for "humility." till, there is some satisfaction in diffusing genial armth throughout the house. It is depressing one's finer feelings to assume the burden of al bills before one has paid his grain bills.

Wednesday, November 6, 191–. My wife is showing disposition to renig on the distribution of the ig. To-day she remarked that she had decided ot to give away any lard, for she had been long-ng for a home-made doughnut for over a year, nd it seemed a crime to give away a pail of lard.

This abrupt right-about-face rather nettled ne, and I said it was revolting extravagance to ive away a ham to the S.'s, whereupon she napped that it was just as bad to give one to he Y.'s.

Upon my pointed and somewhat sarcastic in-uiry as to whom the pigs belonged, and who ought them and fed them and cleaned up after hem, she returned a fervent and somewhat hec-ic demand for information as to whether or not he had been obliged to clean up the kitchen and ndeed every room I entered after I had been in hat nasty barn.

In short, we quarrelled rather bitterly over he matter. But we are none the less determined o give away one of the pigs, but cannot agree

as to whom we may saddle with our benefaction. However, there is time, for the pigs are not killed yet.

Thursday, November 7, 191–. There was a heavy frost last night, and before I left the barn at noon I had taken several rugs that had been thrown out of the window by a certain person whose name had better not be mentioned, and which (the rugs and not the person in question) had been beaten and hung up on the clothesline. With these rugs I had carefully covered several bushels of unusually fine turnips and carrots and a dozen or more most unusually fine squashes that I had not had time to store in the cellar as I had done with most of my crops.

This morning I found that the rugs had been removed to the clothesline, and that the valuable vegetables that I had petted and encouraged and stimulated and cared for for six months were frozen harder than glass agates. My first idea was to smash a window in the house with each of them and to set fire to the rugs, and the idea did much to calm my resentment. I like to think up dreadful things to do, and then not do them.

Still, I do not feel pleased about the matter. The old rugs would not have been hurt by being spread over the vegetables.

I had already stored enough vegetables to

last me through the winter. But some one could have used these turnips and carrots and also the squashes. There is just so much less food in the world for some one. I do not like waste. Some one may want some new rugs some day, that's all. The trouble with me is that I forget the disagreeable things of life, but I shall try hard to remember the rape of the rugs.

However, it is this lack of sympathy with one's aims that has made of our court docket a congested list of divorce libels and separate maintenance petitions. Beware, woman! Even if the rugs did not cost more than twenty-four dollars each and dated back to the Silurian Period, and you had been waiting since the dawn of Christianity for some decent furniture and did n't propose to furnish covers for my old vegetables, and that I would be taking the bedclothes next, you need n't have put it in just that way!

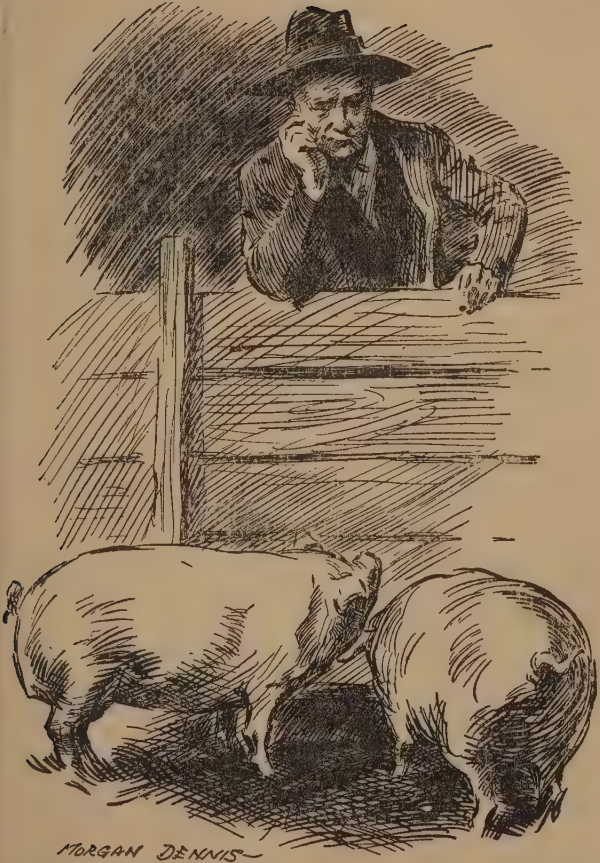
Friday, November 8, 191–. I had to be in Portsmouth to-day at court. At four o'clock on the way home in a friend's automobile, we saw an immense flock of grackles. The main body was being added to by flocks joining it from cornfields and marshy grounds. We travelled three or four miles before the tail of the procession passed us. I never saw so long a flock before. It was interesting to watch individuals. Each bird

makes five rapid strokes with its wings, rising as it does so, then closes its wings and shoots down to its former level, then rises again. But the whole flock goes as straight as an immense black ribbon and with a chatter of bird voices that can be heard for miles.

They were flying north from day feeding grounds to heavy woods for the night. At six o'clock the next morning the big army will come back, dropping small flocks along the line until the army is dissolved into thousands of scattered companies, to be mustered in at four o'clock in the afternoon. This may be the last day they will be with us.

Saturday, November 9, 191–. To-day I bought a pork barrel and a bushel of coarse salt. It was my first real preparation for the execution of my pet pigs and I am not feeling a bit good over it. I wish I did n't have to kill them. It seems positively inhuman. But to keep them much longer is out of the question. I don't dare to think what my pork will cost me a pound, not counting my labor, or my time, or the physical setbacks that I have suffered from chasing them. I still shrink from calculating what they have cost me.

One of the most interesting things to me has been to have some farmer come into my office in November, just after the weather has become gray and cold, and say:



I don't dare to think what my pork will cost me a pound

"Wall, I've got a cellar full of 'taters, 'n' turnips, 'n' squashes, 'n' cabbages, 'n' I've got a bar'l of home-raised pork, 'n' a couple o' crocks of head cheese, 'n' sassige meat, 'n' sides, 'n' hams, 'n' shoulders, 'n' knuckles, 'n' I guess I'm ready fer cold weather."

Why, it sounded much more satisfactory than if he had told me that he had bought a few blocks of Steel Preferred or United Fruit!

And it has been my ambition for years to face a New England winter with the calm assurance engendered by the knowledge that I, too, had a cellar full of vegetables, 'n' a bar'l of home-raised pork, 'n' sassige meat, 'n' hams, 'n' shoulders, 'n' knuckles.

And that is why I bought pigs last spring, and that is why I gave up the comparative freedom of the practice of my profession for the overwhelming responsibility of raising a pair of pigs.

Of course I alleged it to be the result of patriotism and the awakened desire to do my part in reëstablishing on a firm footing the war-depleted pork industry of the country. This was not wholly the reason. I had long desired to keep pigs. Local sanitary prohibition had been revoked.

At any rate, I feel like a Shylock when I think of subsisting on one, either, or both of those pigs. Sometimes I wonder if I am as big a fool as I

look. I have been told so plainly by some persons. I have been assured by others that such is not the case. There seems to be some uncertainty about it. I am undecided on two points. One as to the fact, the other as to which statement is complimentary or — er — er — otherwise.

The ram came this morning before breakfast. I went out and helped the owner lift him out. He was a big white chap, hornless, with a head that had a frontlet as curved and hard as an iron ball, a massive neck, and the most glorious golden eyes imaginable. They reminded me very forcibly of "Krag, the Kootenay Ram." He and Betty made a handsome pair. He seemed as docile as an old ewe, but, as the owner said, a ram is unreliable. So I shall keep my eye peeled to guard against flank attacks. Armed with a club I shall try to win him with appetizing food and kind words. If he prefers to do business with me through the medium of a blackthorn shillalah or a cart stake, well and good.

Sunday, November 10, 191–. This morning after milking I went into the sheep pen. Betty came running up as usual, but the ram held back. I imagine he did not feel sufficiently acquainted. I threw down some hay and a few turnips and watched him carefully, gradually drawing near. As I approached holding out my left hand, I saw

the light gradually go out of his eyes leaving them as cold and hard as flint. He stamped his front foot, bent his neck, when I handed him a most unchristian wallop on his skull that sounded like a three-base hit connecting with the trunk of a tree.

He blinked, turned tail and ran, wiggling his tail. It is well to have him understand at the outset that he can't fool with me for a moment. I have an idea that the owner is laughing in his sleeve expecting that I shall be careless and get knocked endwise. I always wondered how it was that so many people allowed themselves to be knocked down by rams, when a little care, a little courage, and confidence in one's powers are all that is needed to insure mastery over the largest and fiercest ram that ever wore a helmet.

Monday, November 11, 191–. The ground was frozen for the first time to-day. This means a speedy exodus for all the insectivorous birds except the woodpeckers. I have not seen the grackles for two days and I am sure they have gone. The robins still have the berries, but they will leave soon. The swallows have been gone a month or more, the swifts being the last to go.

Tuesday, November 12, 191–. Had to take a crack at the ram to-day. He began to stamp and to

shake his head the moment I entered the pen this morning. I did n't wait for him to get set, but cracked him over the head hard enough to knock down a horse. It did not knock him down or apparently do him any injury, but he turned tail and I chased him two or three times around the pen to make the lesson sink in.

In spite of this I took care to back out of the pen when I got ready to leave. It is undignified to go out heels over head accompanied by the rattling of two pails and the unfeeling laughter of neighbors.

Wednesday, November 13, 191–. My wife is still deploring the need of repairs on the house. According to her the place is going to fall down very soon if something is not done. I paid my daughter's term bills to-day and a small instalment on my grain bills. When the pigs are killed my grain bills will be small. Not negligible. No grain bills are negligible in these days of high prices. The sheep eat but a handful, the cow but a small amount, but those pigs! Och, wirrahoo!

Thursday, November 14, 191–. The first real snowstorm of the season. It was a dry, swirling storm that lasted a good part of the night and left at least six inches on a level. There is scarcely anything more beautiful in nature than the morning

I handed him a most unchristian wallop

after a snowstorm. The sun striking the snow crystals makes a million of diamond flashes. It was so white and smooth and unsullied this morning that I hated to mar its smoothness by wading through it. It was sharp and cold, but I had no sooner stepped out than I heard that most delightful sound of winter, the cheerful five-syllabled call of the chickadee, and saw a half-dozen of the fluffy, beady-eyed little cupids on an apple tree. There is nothing more delightful in spring. It made me feel good all day.

Friday, November 15, 191–. Some people there are who will not embark in any important business on Friday, such as marriages, divorces, real estate or stock deals, cross-continent trips and the like, and when Friday happens on the 13th they will do nothing whatsoever but cross their fingers, walk around the table backwards, and repeat gibberish in order to stall the omens.

I am glad to say I never had much of that superstition in my make-up, and what has happened to me to-day is merely the result of being off my guard for a moment — the psychological moment, let us say. I feel to-night like the gentleman in the "Farmer's Almanac" who is depicted as having a trapdoor in his abdomen, which trapdoor has been removed, leaving an unobstructed view of his bowels for the curious public.

As far as my feelings are concerned I feel that I can go the trapdoor gentleman one better, in that not only my trapdoor has entirely disappeared, but my bowels also.

You see the long-expected contest between mind and matter has taken place, and as is usually the case, it degenerated into a contest between different entities in which mind had little part.

I had gone into the sheep pen feeling at peace with all mankind and grateful for all good things. The big ram seemed quiet and docile and came forward with Betty for his share of the carrots and hay. As I noticed his evident respect for me, I laid aside my club and fed them, talking quietly and stroking Betty. Just for a moment my attention was diverted by snow sliding off the barn roof, when a thunderbolt struck me just above the belt and knocked enough wind out of me to have played a sonata for the tuba with four movements and all in sustained notes.

At the same time I was knocked at least ten feet, and would undoubtedly have gone much farther had not my head struck the side of the pen, lighting up the atmosphere with a shower of comets, shooting stars, pin-wheels, whistling devils, serpents, and every sort and kind of pyrotechnics.

I thought my breath never would return, although I groaned and wheezed and coughed and

retched. I had rolled over on my face and lay there wondering what I had done to induce some one to bomb my premises. Little by little my scattered wits returned as my breath had, and I raised my head to see that infernal ram doing a grotesque two-step in readiness to flatten me again should I come to the scratch. As he nodded his head I had a grotesque idea that he was counting me out. So little by little I raised myself on my hands when he charged again. I dropped flat and he went over me like a shot and struck the side of the pen. It was a wonder his head did not go through.

After he had backed away I still lay there feeling curiously sick and hollow, but gradually feeling better and determined to lick that ram if I had to bite him.

He was evidently in a vicious humor, for when Betty got between us he charged and knocked her flat. By this time I made up my mind where his weakness lay, and again I raised myself on my hands and knees and he came at me like a bullet, but I dropped and he went over me as before, but with this difference, that before he backed off I had him by the legs and in another moment he was on his back and I was astride him hammering him with both fists on the nose and eyes as hard and fast as I could send them in. He stood it as long as he could and then bleated like a lamb,

but I pounded him until I had to stop from sheer weariness. Then I wrenched open his mouth and filled it with coarse sand and earth.

When I let him up he ran his head into a corner where he cowered and trembled. He was completely humbled, but as a matter of fact I think he was not nearly as badly shaken up as I was, and I don't believe his head is any sorer than my knuckles are.

Saturday, November 16, 191–. Pretty sore to-day. When I went into the sheep pen the ram ran his head into the corner and would n't come out. I think he thinks I am the devil. I wish he had thought so before he hit me that lick.

Sunday, November 17, 191–. The owner came for the ram to-day. When he went in the ram ran into the corner. He wanted to know what I had done to him. I said he had charged me and I had flopped him and filled his mouth with sand. He roared with laughter and appeared greatly pleased. Perhaps he would not have been so pleased if he had seen the fight. As the ram was unhurt I thought it would be as well to cherish it as a secret.

Anyway, the devilish ram has been taken away and I am sure he is much less dangerous than before. Now I can let Betty out.

Monday, November 18, 191–. Resumed work at the woodpile to-night by lantern light. Got the globe on the other lantern. It is the first time I have managed to hit that one. My skill is returning. I only need practice.

I am wondering if it would not be a good idea to offer a prize for the man breaking the largest number of lantern globes in honorable competition. It would be interesting to be able to point to the champion. Then if I could excite sufficient competition I could get my wood split up promptly. And with my undoubted skill I ought to keep the prize at home. I shall think it over. It is worth considering.

Tuesday, November 19, 191–. I remember a man who used to love to split wood. He was a well-educated man and very fond of reading and repeating poetry, and he had a way of splitting wood with a grunt that all real wood-splitters give and say it keeps them from laming their sides, and as he split he repeated poetry. It was a most remarkable and interesting exhibition, occasionally with digressions. It was something as follows:

"The curfew — chuck! woof! — tolls the knell — thud!
woof! (reversing the axe)
Of parting — thud! woof! — day — chuck! woof!
The lowing herd — chuck! woof! — wind slowly — chuck!
woof!

O'er — thud! woof! — the lea — thud! woof!
The plough — chuck! woof! crash! — Damn that window. I did n't think that stick would go so far!
Man homeward — chuck! woof! — plods his wear — thud! — y way
And — chuck! woof! — Ow! Ow! There I did n't mean to hit you! Did it hurt? Well, I'm sorry. I guess I've done enough for one day. Broken a window and nearly broken your head!"

Wednesday, November 20, 191–. As a boy I always dreaded to go in swimming in cold water. Most of the boys would rush in with a shout and a tremendous splash. I would wade in and shiver and hold myself with both hands until I got to a certain point when I would go under like a frog, and I wondered why I hesitated. It was so in making up my mind to have my pigs killed. I hated to give the word, and ducked and side-stepped and stalled and dawdled and postponed and *mañana'd* until I had waded to a certain point of financial indebtedness, and then I took the plunge.

This morning I sent word to the man to take away the pigs, and left town feeling like an accessory to wilful and deliberate murder. At noon I was back again, but the place did not seem the same. I missed the raucous complaints of my friends before their meals and their satisfied grunts after. The barn seemed like Water Street on the Sabbath — deadly quiet. My cow might low her head off, my sheep bleat until her tongue

ran out a foot, my fowls crow and cackle until their throats cracked, but the barn and the premises reminded me of Goldsmith's "Deserted Village."

And yet I was glad it was over. Spared the necessity of buying pork and lard and ham and sausage and knuckles and head cheese and chitlins and spareribs, I might in time pay up my grain bills and be a free man once more — at least tolerably free. There were still the front hall, the ceilings of the three rooms and the dining-room to think about. On the whole I decided that I would n't give away one pig, after all. It would save much discussion, some ill-feeling, and some money.

This afternoon the butcher called at my office. I was very much pleased to see him, as I had been mentally computing the dressed weight of my pigs at twenty-three cents a pound and upwards.

Judge of my amazement and my consternation when he informed me that the smaller pig was tubercular.

"Tubercular!" I gasped. "Why, you wild-eyed, staring, gibbering idiot, those pigs never missed a meal in their lives, never had a sick day. They have been fed on sweet milk and boiled potatoes and corn meal and ground oats and have had dry quarters and plenty of sun! You are crazy, man!"

"Wa'al Squire, perhaps I be, but I know when pigs is tubercular as well as you know the law. If you don't believe it, send down a vet."

"I will," I replied. And at once called Dr. W. and instructed him to repair with all speed to the shambles and to examine those deceased animals for tuberculosis and for any and every other disease under the heavens.

An hour later the doctor informed me that not only one pig, but both were far gone with tuberculosis, and should be sent to the fertilizer factory as soon as possible; that he had found in both animals marked evidence of Introsusception, Valvulus, Enteritis, and Electropium.

I asked the doctor if that was all he found, and he replied that that was all he had found so far, but that by a more complete examination he might be able to diagnose a few more diseases, such as Thumps, Rickets, and Valvular Disease of the Heart.

I told him that he need make no further examination of the pigs for those diseases, but that I felt sure that I was suffering from them, especially the last.

I then asked him if these diseases, when added to the tuberculosis, rendered the carcasses any less valuable than if affected by the tuberculosis alone.

He said that he thought not; that, as long as

the tuberculosis rendered them of no value whatever, the four other diseases found, and the three more that he might have found, did not affect their value materially.

I told him I was interested in the poor fertilizer man, who had a hard time to make a living, and that if the carcasses were still good for fertilizer I should feel as if I had not lived in vain.

He told me that I need not worry about that, and then, for the kindly purpose of diverting my thought into a new channel of apprehension, he said he would send me his bill when he had made it out.

I feel as I imagine a small boy must feel, who has saved money for an entire year for the purchase of a red rubber squeal-bag that soap-bubbled at the very first blow and left him nothing but a red stick and a host of bitter memories.

Thursday, November 21, 191–. It has been a most interesting, amusing, and instructive experiment, and cruelly expensive. Yet, being by nature somewhat optimistic, I am by no means discouraged nor cast down. It is hard to be optimistic with a pile of unreceipted grain bills on my office desk, and with the disturbing realization that painters, grainers, glaziers, paperhangers, and more or less skilled and horribly

expensive and highly paid artisans are working on the ceilings for the front halls and three rooms and on the plastering of the dining-room.

But there is a bright side to it. I still have my pork barrel, and so far no medical expert whether homœopath, allopath, or veterinarian, has intimated that the pork barrel is afflicted with Tuberculosis, Introsusception, Electropium, or Varicose Veins, nor has any living person accused my bushel of salt to be afflicted with Valvular Disease of the Heart. There is great comfort in this, and I can look into the future with some confidence.

I once knew a man who built a four-hundred-and-fifty-dollar piano-box buggy to match a three-dollar carriage mat that struck his fancy. He had a fidelity to his ideals that was admirable, although expensive. Is there any reason why I, having a pork barrel and a bushel of salt, should not provide the pigs? It seems to me to be a sort of sacred duty. Some people would be disheartened and quit, but not I. I refuse to be crushed, although my pork has cost me about a dollar and thirty cents a pound for every pound I lost and I am glad I did not have the pigs weighed.

Spring will come again. And until it comes and I know again the delights of ploughing, of planting, and of cultivating my own crops, I may have the real satisfying pleasure of milking, bedding,

I still have my pork barrel

feeding, and caring for my stock twice a day by lantern light. And it is a pleasure to see them warm and well fed and comfortable.

And it will be a pleasure to get about one egg in three days from thirty hens during the winter, and on the days when I get the one egg I shall rejoice in the mathematical certainty that the one egg is just so much more than if they had not laid at all. Oh, there is a pleasant side to everything if you only look for it!

And the all-too-short winter days in the office will be crowded with the intensely interesting details of a general practice which will eventually, I trust, pay those grain bills before the time comes to contract others. And every pleasant day, as the afternoon wears on and the shadows begin to deepen, I may look across the square to the west where the tall elms and the colonial houses stand stark and black against the rose of the after sunset, and as this fades into darkness a single brilliant star appears, telling me that another day of professional work is ended, and that it is time to get into my barn clothes and assume my badges of labor, the lantern, the shovel, and the pitchfork.

THE END

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